

SEVEN GREAT STORIES of the FUTURE

# SCOOPS

The STORY  
PAPER of  
TO-MORROW

2d

EVERY THURSDAY



THE FLYING  
ROBOT

*Swoops!*

THRILLING WONDER STORY  
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# GIANT EYE to Search the HEAVENS



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## WONDERS OF A NEW OBSERVATORY

**A** GIANT new observatory, which will enable astronomers to observe and photograph stars a million times fainter than the unaided eye can see, is in the course of construction in Texas.

The skill of some of the greatest astronomical designers in the world has gone into the construction of the observatory, and it is evident, as expected that its giant eye will observe many new wonders in the heavens.

A marble dome, 66 feet in diameter and weighing 115 tons, will house the giant telescope, and the stars will be observed by means of mirrors.

The 90-inch main mirror (2), a four-ton disc made of heat-resistant glass, the grinding and polishing of which will take two years, will pick up the light from the stars and reflect it up to an interchangeable convex mirror (3) or short focus (8). This in turn will reflect through elliptical mirrors (3) to the eyepiece.

An observing cradle (10), carried on the girders of the dome, will enable observers to use the instrument as a Newtonian Telescope or to take photographs with the camera (7).

A Spectrograph Room (4) for observing the spectra of stars is another feature of the new observatory.

March 10, 1934—SCOOPS

# The FLYING ROBOT

**IT FLIES! It speaks! It sees! A new terror of the Wonder World. Gangsters are after it, a Foreign Power wants it; but the Flying Robot has ways of its own**

## ★ THE GANGSTERS SWOOP

**A** FIRST alarm was a big hurry when dawned up on the lonely glass road. Ahead the great dark mass from the lumbered steps half a dozen men emerged. "You guys ready? O.K. then!" Spike Pirelli, big brown topcoat covering his slim frame, and black hat pulled low over his peering eyes, grunted the words. Sitting in the driving seat of the robot, he watched while the others moved up the side of the glass like an invading army. The foremost lagged the exact shape of a Thompson machine gun; the rest gripped hand-guns automatic of an American pattern.

Spike watched them as they made for the big, glass-domed building half-way up the sky.

A strange new robot had brought him and his gangsters from Chicago. He wanted the wonderful Flying Robot which the famous British scientist, Geoffrey Harder, had created after years of experiment. And Pirelli was determined to get it.

All arrangements had been made for getting the Flying Robot away. The hurry would take it to Storm Point, where Spike's own yacht waited. And then it would be an easy run to America.

But if he hoped to take the possession of the Flying Robot by surprise, however, Pirelli was doomed to disappointment.

Within the domed building three men stood. They were peering into the glass screen of a camera obscura, and it showed the figure of the approaching gangsters closely in its depths.

Geoffrey Harder, tall, distinguished-looking, pushed a thin hand through the mass of silver-grey hair which covered his broad brow.

"Spike Pirelli!" he murmured. "Come to take the XT by force. I was afraid of this when I refused to do it to his gangster organization. And we are practically destroyed."

One of his companions wiped chemical-stained hands on his white shirtwaist's neck and looked a little awed. Dr. Weiden, the scientist, was too old and gentle to be a fighter.

But the third member of the trio was a different proposition altogether. Lynn Barker had joined Harder straight from a famous English "Varsity," where he had acquired the grey beard with his scientific and mechanical knowledge.

Long hours of study in laboratory and lecture room had not prevented him from winning a Bagger blue, and he had striven his right to victory three years in succession.

"These fellows will have to fight for it,



Yelling their terror, the gangsters went dashing away as the Flying Robot rose into the air.

then," he snapped. His gaze wandered to the great metal figure which hovered towards the huge glass dome of the scientific work shop.

XY, with its sensitive legs and arms of flexible steel, sensitive nose and great, domed head, looked like some human giant.

But there the similarity ended. Wings were folded back from the big shoulders, there was a great telescopic screen in its chest; the eyes were lightless circles, and where the mouth should have been was the rim of a loudspeaker.

By remote control, the wonder Robot could walk, talk and fly, and it could travel equally well through water. In its great arm it could carry as much as a ton over the ground or through the air, yet its telescopic fingers were so sensitive they could pick a selected pin from a cushion filled with pins of various sizes.

In supernatural hands the Flying Robot could be a terrible force for evil. That was why Harder had refused an offer for his creation from Germany, a foreign Power. He had deliberately made up his mind that XT should not be used for war purposes.

Then Spike Pirelli, the famous American gangster, had offered a cool million dollars for the contrivance. Harder had in his study the correspondence that had passed between them. But, unable to satisfy the British scientist as to the purpose for which he required it, Pirelli had also been refused.

The startling disclosure of Weiden's unique sporting gun interrupted Harder's thoughts.

A yell sounded outside as one of the gangsters took the heavy sling in his elbow. Then they came the bank out-cast of the Thompson, and Dr. Weiden slumped down from his window with a groan.

"The scoundrel!" Barker dropped on one knee beside his colleagues, and sent Lynn Barker scurrying for handguns and a load of water. When he had roughly loaded Weiden's weapon, the old man was still unconscious, but Harder decided he was in no immediate danger.

The young "Varsity" man had mixed the father rifle and was now crouching down at the window. But Pirelli's men, peering by their knees, had gone into town.

Then the third and jer of a tree-trunk creaking steadily against the dome told Harder that it would only be a matter of time before the gangsters broke in.

"I'm afraid they'll get what they want,"



## Mechanical Man makes a Kill

second time the scientist crashed into unconsciousness. His inert body was dragged into an antechamber and the door closed upon him.

"First! Now to capture the Big One," hissed Leblanc.

He glanced into the television screen and got a view of the countryside over which the Robot was now flying. Basking large in one corner was a clearing of Lynn Roberts' hold solely in the Robot's arms.

First, Goddard Leblanc, we must get rid of this possible foe, and to this purpose Leblanc started the metal man over the course of a swiftly flowing machine record. Then, controlling the keyboard which yatted from the control box, he pressed an ivory key marked "Finger release."

Immediately the Robot released the body of the inter-cybernet as it skinned low. A splash sounded clearly in the river as the young man dropped into the rapid river. He was whirled into a whirl, swirling desperately with the grip of the bottom.

The Flying Robot rose once more in answer to Leblanc's hands on the controls and came hurtling back to its glass domed eye.

There was a triumphant smile on the spy's face as he steered the Robot home. In his mind's eye he already saw the country for which he worked striking to the conquest of Europe with an army of these metal men. And Count Leblanc rewarded with high office for his part in the creation of that army!

Also, for Leblanc? A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. And he possessed only the faintest idea of the thing he controlled in power for him a Frankenstein.

Into the glass came the Flying Robot, a stirring sight with its silvery wings, and the

gyro-race, spanning between its shoulders. But instead of coming to rest amid the bushes as Leblanc planned, it began to circle round the dome of the scientist's retreat. Through the television Leblanc could see it whirling dizzily like some gigantic humming pigeon.

His silver face blanched. He realized that the Robot was out of control. And Leblanc lost his head.

Madly he manipulated one after another of the complicated switches and levers in an effort to find the right one. The result brought disaster.

The Flying Robot dashed suddenly. Its sensitive metal protected head crashed into the glass pane of the dome, shivering there into a thousand splinters.

Fortunately the metal wings of the Robot folded down automatically, and the large figure crashed headlong into the workshop. Even then Leblanc would have been safe, but with the wild instinct of self-preservation he dashed across the control room, fall in the path of the Robot's fall.

Nothing could save him then. XT hit him like a hammer man, crashed him to the concrete floor. He lay crushed and lifeless.

The stream of death descended on the place. For some minutes nothing stirred. Then a great hammering sounded on the door of the chamber in which Leblanc had locked the scientist.

Goddard Harber had returned completely sane just as the Robot crashed through the dome, and the sound of falling glass, the thunder of the Robot's fall had given him a good idea of what had occurred.

"Warden!" he called urgently, again and again. "Wake up man, and get me out of this!"

His voice penetrated into the mists in the

infused analyzer's brain. Dr. Warden sat up on the very bed and partially baled himself in his bed. Then he tottered across to the door of the room in which Harber was imprisoned. The key was still in the lock and he turned it.

Goddard Harber stood on the threshold and surveyed the man in the next room.

"Good heavens! The Robot's come back—at the end of a human life. That fellow, whoever he was, will never answer again. Give me a hand, Warden, if you can. We'll shift the Robot, and examine him."

Examining all their combined strength they rolled the metal man off his victim. One glance told Harber that the spy was dead. They carried his inert figure into the other room and laid it on a couch.

Harber's next concern was for the extent of the damage done to the Flying Robot. He strode across to XT and made a careful examination of the whals of the metal oval torso.

The harm the Robot had suffered was surprisingly small. The glass of one of the "eyes" was shattered, but fortunately this only protected the brain and vision apparatus with which the robot shared its course at night.

The headgear case was badly crumpled and one leg damaged. The rear tail of the unit of the "lucifer" was a few dents on the metal shoulder. Even the toughest glass of the television screen in the cliff's breast was unharmed.

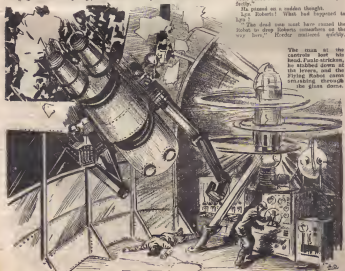
Striding to the control panel Harber ran expert hands over the keys and switches. A number of glass globes, visible in appearance as window valves, glowed redly and the scarred figure of the Robot rose upright.

"Excellent! Excellent!" exulted the white-haired scientist. "XT still works perfectly."

He pined on a sudden thought. Lynn Roberts! What had happened to her?

"The dead one must have ruined the Robot to drop Roberts somewhere on the way home," Harber muttered quickly.

The man at the controls lost his head. Paralytic-stricken, he slumped down at the levers, and the Flying Robot careered smashing through the glass dome.



## Flying Robot's Great Rescue

"Good, good," he may have been killed."

A sudden light came to him. He'd read the metal man had over the wires to find him and endeavor to find the machine with the aid of the television.

The scientist's long, white fingers played over the keys of the controller, and as the robot strode across the floor of the workshop, through the smashed double doors and out into the gloom. Here he unfolded his wings and, with the gyro-compass spinning, soared up into the clear air.

Through the television Griffiths Harder followed the robot's course with keen eyes.

He saw the white road, the leather-covered slopes, and then the robot was flying over the valley through which the river wound its course.

Harder took in the textured surface of the fanning waters, the jagged shapes of the boulders and rocks that littered the bed of the swollen torrent. In places there was a gleaming stream where sportmen fished for salmon and trout. Now, among the great heavy runs it was a treacherous, boiling river, deep and wide.

Suddenly Harder strained his eyes as he peered closer into the screen. He had noticed a white figure clinging precariously to a giant boulder rock in mid-stream.

The scientist recognized his assistant.

"All right! Hang on, Lynn!" he shouted the words into the microphone, and as the words issued from the speaker roos of the robot which now was hovering above him,

Robots nodded to show that he had heard. Help had come only just in time. Already his numb fingers were slipping on the slimy rock. Once he let go nothing could save him from the deadly whirlpool that spun dizzily in the sunlight lower downstream.

It was a definite task to maneuver the Flying Robot. Harder's fingers trembled slightly on the controls, and the slight attack of nerves proved his undoing. Down swooped the robot, but the telescopic lenses, instead of aiming the figure of the merman, brushed him from the rock.

He disappeared into the foaming waters.

Harder groaned as he saw the young man's head bob up again, and then away away to the whirling.

Someday he must save his father he was drawn down into that dreadful swirl. . . .

### ★ XT GETS HIS MEN!

CALMER, closer to the whirling waters of the helpline became figure again. He was trailing like a cork in a mill race.

But the robot was faster. Almost shimmering the bubbling surface, XT belched through the air. And this time Harde made no mistake.

Robots was almost on the edge of the whirling when the robot's right arm stabbed downwards and a cry of triumph sounded in the speaker came as at last the expanding figure found purchase on the merman's wrist. He was drawn up from that hungry

circle of death and, safe in the robot's arms, carried swiftly back to the gloom.

"Thank heaven Lynn's safe," breathed Harder, as he pulled the lever that raised the robot to let Roberts escape on his feet outside the house.

"Don't speak too soon, guy!"

The words, spoken in familiar nasal tones, caused Harder to stop dead in surprise. He saw Spider Pirelli standing in the doorway of the control room. The gangster's hairy face was clamped on to a cigar, and he held his cigarette aloof on the shortest stem.

"Yeah, I've come for the show-biz, Kooty," he sneered the gang-leader. "My men outside will attend to the other guy when he gets out inside this bang out. Get this and get it good. Any more tricks from you and I'll blow you to hell!"

The gang-leader was in a raging temper at the way the robot had upset his plans. But now he thought he had a better idea. The men in the robot's dressing room for Stern Point and the public, had picked up him and two of his men from the scene of the hairy smash.

"Now you'll do exactly as I tell you, Harde. And don't forget"—he tapped the automatic on his head—"there's a bullet marked 'you' in this gun. I want that man, Harde, and I'll not let him go. You're going to fly in for us to Stern Point. I'll be the real 'big guy'!"

Harder looked as though he was going to refuse point blank, but the menacing weapon in the gangster's hand silenced him. With a shiver of resignation he turned back to the controls of the Flying Robot.

It looked as though Pirelli was going to pull off the last trick.

Harder, however, had a strange expression on his serious face as he bent over the robot's controls.

He Pirelli looked just as though the long, sensitive fingers were playing a tune as they glided over the key board. They were—  
—a tune the gangster was very sure to dance to! For as the man held outside a cluster of frightened paths suddenly extended. The voices of Pirelli's men.

"Hello, what's the racket?" snarled the gang-leader. "If you're double-crossed me!" And his finger curled aggressively around the trigger of his gun.

Next moment it dropped from his suddenly nerveless hand. His eyes were staring from his head, he stared at the great metal arm that worked through the door of the control room.

In response to the Flying Robot, Pirelli's men stepped forward in the telescopic lenses, and he was dragged, struggling helplessly, out through the door. In the next half the robot crept on almost human fashion, and Pirelli on the rest of his men wrapped in a straggling mass of arms and legs in the robot's other arm.

Pushed under the robot's great arm, Pirelli and his men were blown outside the workshop, the robot waving the ground in long strides. Then the planet on his back collapsed, and, with gyro-compass whirling, he floated into the air once more.

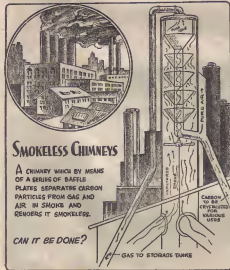
A jockey, of an hour caded over the main streets of Glasgow. Harder started his metal man to Duke Street police-station and headed into the television as he saw the attachment between your car into the street to investigate the cause of the crowd that collected to view the strange sight.

XT standing like a light-house on the sidewalk, stopped still and dropped the shivering racketeer into the legs of the bus.

"This is Professor Griffiths Harder speaking," came a voice through the loudspeaker cone in the metal man's mouth. "I give these men a charge for attempted robbery and murder."

Those policemen were not too slow-witted to grab their men. The gangsters were led away to a cell to await their trial, which resulted in a stiff sentence of imprisonment and subsequent deportation.

## Can it be DONE ?



### SMOKELESS CHIMNEYS

A CHIMNEY WHICH BY MEANS OF A SERIES OF BAFFLE PLATES SEPARATES CARBON PARTICLES FROM GAS AND AIR IN SMOKE AND REMOVS IT SMOKELESS.

CAN IT BE DONE?

Fig. which is used by the maker of this advertisement with carbon, which burns without producing any smoke. If a smokeless chimney could be invented, it would be the smokeless-gas (the fig. Who can invent this big discovery?)

# MASTER of the MOON

**CAUGHT IN THE DEADLY  
SARGOSSA of Space, and  
Fighting the Man who would  
Conquer the World—the Master  
of the Moon**

## ★ MOON MASQUERADE

**L**IKE enormous adam sharks, the two great planet ships were floating side by side in the silent blackness of space. Slung broad over head up a rope that stretched between the two vessels were four figures, three of them in suits like those of doctors, all with enormous transparent helmets.

It was a weird, amazing scene. Hundreds of miles beneath stretched the twinkling splendor of the lunar globe, seeming to fill all heaven with its pale glow.

The whole picture was monstrous and awful, yet it was so sharply etched in the bright black frame of space that every detail was clear.

Nothing could be more incredible than the mighty mass of jelly like space that hung like a great curtain above one of the ships, the *Minor*. The liner was entangled in this stuff, its stern motion taken smothered with the jelly. And the whole curtain threatened to subside and envelope the ship.

"Things look a bit sticky!" said Lord Algy Tyford. In the disguise of a captain of the Moon soldiers, he was the last to climb the rope.

He looked down with a shudder.

He had done good work during this recent mission to the Moon with the fiery Captain Nick Chance, skipper of the lightning ship of space, the *Invader*.

While he was stationed on the Moon, Lord Algy had discovered an enormous lunar gas firing shaft, containing Moon soldiers, up at his own ship.

The captain of the Moon soldiers was now being strangled out beside the huge gas. Lord Algy had "borrowed" his uniform, and in one of the shells had prepared himself up to his ship again.

He had passed master with the Moon soldiers in the confusion of the battle on the dock of the *Invader*, but now all around danger hovered like a terrible thing.

Behind him in the distance the fearsome Moon soldiers who had captured the planet ship stood from the crowd of lighted ports.

Lord Algy agreed then, however. The child of fate at his heart was for the figure that waited on the other ship.

There was something terrifying, terrifying in the very pose of the tall, bearded man who waited quietly in the open air lock chamber of the *Minor*.

A startled look had crossed Dr. Elago Maelac's face when he first saw Lord Algy in charge of the captured ship and the Moon prisoners.

He had recovered himself quickly, but Lord Algy had grown suddenly pensive.



Picking up the Master of the Moon bodily to his arms, Lord Algy hurried him out into the frigid blackness.

The young Foor wore a helmet with a shining crucifix Moon, as a mark of rank, and he had spooned even his own friends with the Moon captain's costume.

He had only just told Submarine Ben of his real identity, thereby giving that sturdy square-jawed such a shock that he nearly lost his hold on the rope.

"I say, you know, old chap," blurted Lord Algy. "I'm sure that fearful bloke over there has spotted me, from the old color up, as it were. The planet's bright, y'know. Dashed awkward, that's what I call it!"

The "fearful bloke" Lord Algy had referred to happened to be that almost unbearable personality—the Master of the Moon.

The brilliant, sinister Dr. Maelac had his real scientist, Captain Nick Chance, a prisoner aboard his ship, and that was why Algy had moved the *Invader* up alongside. But he was now beginning to wish he had not been so impulsive.

"Get to go through with it," Sam grunted at his glassed helmet, mouthed Algy's.

Yet the usually jolly passenger emitted a hollow grunt. The oxygen tank on his back must look like a green lamp, he felt,

with the glowering Moon armor pulled up over it. And as for his big transparent helmet, lit up in his space suit, it stood out like a light-house.

"I'm rumbled," said Algy gloomily. "Oh, dear me. He's got that ray gun in his hand, and—well, hang him, explosion!"

Algy's jaw opened.

Change, the best-known Mongolian space-soldier, was slumbering over the rail. He was clearly followed by Benko, the immense black. Then the other two climbed up to the steel platform.

Doctor Martin, standing in the capboard-like air lock, held the ray trained on them, and there was an orange fire in his black eyes.

Lord Algy stiffened. He, too, had ray guns in metal holders, taken from the Moon captain he had knocked out, but he knew from their thin beam that they would only emit pencil rays.

They were sufficient to blow a man to nothingness, but the Master of the Moon held a special ray gun that could shatterly blow a pore of shining light that would not possibly penetrate the force of them, but possibly cause the *Invader* to disappear as well.

The situation was full of peril, and the last thing Lord Algy wanted was a duel with ray guns.

But he was certain the sinister assassin was awaiting him.

The Master of the Moon beckoned him to enter the air lock.

Lord Algyroon Tyford stepped forward smartly. He was going to play the part of the Moon captain in the bitter end.

The two tramped helms in the air lock of the planet ship. It looked like a strange corner, but in reality it was close as that the Master of the Moon's voice could carry to his supposed lieutenant.

"Captain Algyroon, why do you wear that helmet?" The Lunar Lord spoke in cold, piercing tones.

Lord Algy fought for control. He knew he had not the steel chest bones and hard face of the Moon people, and the Lunar Lord's eyes were like blazing sunbeams probing him. Dr. Marlowe would know he was not the Moon captain.

Nevertheless Lord Algy had bravely

"Master," he said, "I met a young Earthling and killed him. This helmet is worn as a trophy." He spoke in English, but there was no sign in Lord Algy's features. The Master of the Moon nodded, appearing to be playing with him like a cat with a mouse. To his bearded lips there came a cruel smile, and his black eyes were all a-glimmer.

Nevertheless, after a moment he seemed satisfied with the explanation.

"So! You killed the young English Lord, he parroted softly. — You have done well, Captain Algyroon. Very well, indeed."

Lord Algy drew a gasping breath of relief. He felt almost dizzy. Had he really got away with it? Heated the best, dangerous was whose personality projected through the whole world of space? It seemed too good to be true.

After a moment the Master of the Moon spoke, all purposely. — You captured the Earthling ship, that was good work."

"Master, I like to be given," answered Lord Algy, smiling the terrible grin.

"Then why did you not bring your Moon soldiers around?" the Master of the Moon sneered at him. "I need them with lightning to cut away this space of space. We are drifting into the dead area from whence no ship returns. Why this delay?"

"Master, I but waited your orders," stammered Lord Algy.

"Three quick, fool!" bellowed out Dr. Marlowe with a sudden blow of energy. "Bring the soldiers around; get to work—before we are doomed!"

Lord Algy turned his back immediately and scrambled on to the rope. He could not tell whether that was the correct mode of getting out of the possession of the Lunar Lord, but he was glad to get away at any cost. He was so surprised to find his whole body in a swirl as he went back across the rope.

"By God, I know, what a bouncer!" he muttered. "I mean to say, his temperament's banded on him. But I killed him along rather easily. I fancy I mean, he must be a piffing sort of an ass, really."

In that, however, Lord Algyroon Tyford was making a gross error.

The Master of the Moon was even then staring after him with eyes black as coals. He had known all along that Lord Algy was an impostor.

"The fool!" he muttered out-of-control.

He was planning a subtle and terrible form of death for the far-learned young space adventurer. Dr. Marlowe's eyes took delight in his schemes. But first he needed the Moon soldiers to back this dangerous space of space away from the ship.

Unless that was done, and quickly, the planet ship would drift into the dead area.

Dr. Marlowe had not the slightest doubt that Lord Algy would bring the Moon

soldiers across to the lifeless. His word had been law on the Moon as long, that the idea of an order being ignored was unthinkable.

He did not even realize he was the man, but at the point of the ray gun he noticed the three captured space-soldiers near the air lock, and shot the shooter. Then came the killing of ray, and Dr. Marlowe opened the lunar door.

Chief, Rando and Ben Pike stepped short as they entered the doorway, staring in horror and dread at their leader, Captain Nick Chase.

The lightning whirled by on his back, arms outstretched, while round him still hovered a few of the faithful Moon bats that his enemy had loosed upon him.

"Good!" bellowed Chase, and his shadowy eyes had a gleaming glance as they turned from his beloved master to the bearded alien with the spear, Algy ray gun.

## ★ TRAPPING THE MOON SOLDIERS

LORD ALGY did open the inner door of the air chamber at the entrance.

There was a gleam in his narrowed blue eyes as he surveyed the hosts of ugly looking Moon men who had captured the Earthling.

"Take these lightning back with me! Not likely!" he breathed.

His hands hovered over the metal bolts of his ray gun, for the Moonmen were advancing on him with unmistakable hostility.

They saw him that they had been fooled; and this was not their captain at all.

These Moon people were fearfully ugly, with upturned jaws that were covered with sun-baked old grey parchment. Eyes placed at the young Algy as they did so to the attack.

They were the picked shock troops of the Moon, and though some of them had more than a fifth of the muscular strength of Lord Algy, there were enough of them to overcome him.

The lightning the young ray pulled the long, thin-hand ray pistols from their belt.

"Back, you scum!" he grunted through his teeth. "Or... all right then!"

One of the hideous soldiers had thrown a spear, and Lord Algy dodged just in time.

"Broom!" he yelled.

Walsh, paralytic rays of orange light were streaking across the deck. And the soldier who had thrown the bullet withered, twisted and seemed to assume a ghastly spread shape before vanishing altogether.

It set Lord Algy's nerves on edge, and his fingers relaxed on the trigger.

He had no companion about him, not these hideous people. And yet the manner of their vanishing was appalling. It sickened him suddenly, and he could not get on.

But he had done enough to reach them a lesson. The Moonmen covered back, uttering peculiar squawking cries that went through Lord Algy like the snap of a pistol on a slide.

Suddenly his mind was made up. He had got to get out of here.

"Back!" he yelled.

All idea of holding the ship and fighting with her was gone from his mind. He wanted to be out of this place with its maddening mockery of men.

"Back it, I'll get back to the others and take one of the space gun. I'll let it with you and staff in case I have to do a moonlight job."

The space gun Lord Algy referred to was the shining, topaz-like shells in which the Moonmen had been hoarded from the enormous Lunar gun.

The young space adventurer hastily prepared food from the lockers, and everything else he thought they might need from the

Minister, and crammed the stuff into the tin can.

While the Moon soldiers watched him his wits were alert to keep. Lord Algy abandoned the loaded space gun down the emergency and into the air-lock chamber.

The Moon soldiers crowded up to him, but at a threatening movement of the ray gun they covered their eyes.

"Get to put it up so that they can't get out," he bellowed.

He turned one of the ray pistols on the grooves of the sliding shutter, and pulled the trigger. The heavy armor slugs played on the metal, and it ran like molten lead. When he pulled the handle again, the door would not pull back.

"That's sealed the lightning," he yelled with relief.

Now came his most ticklish job. His heart beating a wild tune, he pushed open the sliding door of the air-lock chamber.

Overhead the stars moved steadily in the velvet blackness of absolute space. The two enormous stars shone, scattered by a couple fifteen-foot rays, were looking like scorching ships in a rough sea.

At times showers of tiny meteors, traveling at bullet-like speeds, whizzed about the void like hailstones.

There was danger enough in this dread region.

The Master of the Moon had said that they were drifting in the Sargasso of Space. And as far as Lord Algy could tell they were already in some airless bath, perhaps all that remained of some planet that had been disrupted into thousands of tiny fragments many millions of years before.

And they were drifting in this great gulf of space—where?

"Dashed if I know, or care," bellowed Lord Algy. "Get to join up with the chaps."

He unfastened the space gun on to the rope, and pushing it before him, climbed upward.

He swung precariously, but going hand over hand on the rope as he had done before, Lord Algy climbed up to the other planet-ship.

It was still work, with the blinding white Moon drifting far, far beneath him, with clouds of rock hurling through space close by him, and with at all the fear that the Master of the Moon's heavy, bearded face might appear at one of the port windows of the *Victor*.

If he saw him without the following of Moon soldiers Dr. Marlowe might very well decide to send a heavy dose of ray-light out from the air-lock, and that would be the end of Lord Algyroon Tyford.

Those round ports of the *Victor*—three fountains of light through the tripod blackness, one all seemed to point in the young adventurer on the rope. Lord Algy felt every moment to be driven out in an agony of suspense.

Sure with some told him he was entering a fearful trap, but he stilled fear. He was not going to desert the space-soldiers or the red-headed scientist, Captain Nick Chase.

He reached the other ship, and working like a Trojan, heaped up the topaz-like projectiles. He got it up all right, and released the rope that held the two craft together. The *Victor* began to fall away behind. The Moon soldiers were based up hither on to that other planet ship.

"Better leave the space gun here," Lord Algy breathed as he went into the air-lock and slid the door. "Dash it, with I was back at Tyford Park putting rabbits instead of this!"

The certainty that he was sending his hand into a mine grew stronger, and he heart beat a wild tattoo. Nevertheless, there was no help for it.

With rapidly drumming pulses, Lord Algy pulled the lunar air-lock door.



## ★MOON MASTER'S GRIM JEST

**L**ORD ALGY's face went white as he took on the view on the upper deck of the Master of the Moon's planet ship, *Arcton*.

The three space-rafters, *Submarine Sun*, *Clang* and *Beetle*, stood side by side in a line against the wall of the planet ship, glinted and gripped together by what appeared to be extraordinary spring coils attached to the wall.

Captain Nick Chance lay on the deck, writhing miserably. His nose red blooded, his eyes blooded as he tried to struggle up.

While the Master of the Moon was sitting on his throne-like control chair, the protective ray blaring and spluttering around him.

As the Master of the Moon saw Lord Algy he swung his arm in the Russian salute. "Red, Blister!" Lord Algy breathed to himself, and raised his arm in a similar salute.

"Greetings, Captain Arcton," mocked the evil scoundrel. "My Moon soldiers, where are they?"

"They come, Lord," Lord Algy returned in the deepest voice he could command.

For a moment Dr. Masha gazed. Perhaps a suspicious shaped itself in his mind, but he dismissed it. Like most clever men, he under-rated his opponent.

Quickly the quailing triangle returned to his face. He had got the measure of the young fool.

He believed that the Moon soldiers were coming over the ray. His subtle, deadly mind was extracting the last ounce of machine-planet out of playing with Lord Algy.

Then, suddenly, he tired of the game. He looked down at Nick Chance lying on the floor, coming back out of the dark out of unconsciousness.

"Captain," he purred softly, with a malevolent smile, "you are before me the Moon soldier who killed your comrade, Lord Algernon Tyford. See, he wears the glorious helmet as a trophy. He has dispatched me gently. So much so that I promise you that your own life and those of your crew shall be spared if you do me the favour of dispatching that Moonman with a bullet from your revolver."

Through the mist Captain Nick heard the words, through the red fog before his eyes he saw the criminal behind Lord Algy.

Almost, before the demon scoundrel's words had struck home in his brain, he whipped out his revolver.

He struggled to his feet, his handsome, red-bearded face distorted.

"You say this scoundrel killed his Lordship?" he growled.

Growling slowly he raised a bullet into the cylinder of his Colt. It seemed that in a vast waste of blood rage Captain Nick was about to carry out the scoundrel's suggestion at the bearded scoundrel and shoot.

Heading grimly to the ray, Lord Algy made the perilous journey between the two planet ships hovering in space.

"My word holds good," the Master of the Moon purred. He had pushed back his arms behind on his knees and was lighting a cigarette.

The three space-rafters cried out in horror as they watched; but the words were muffled by the transparent helmets they wore and Captain Nick did not hear them.

Lord Algy struggled frantically with his space helmet, snatched the catch and pushed it back on his knees.

He found himself looking down the muzzle of the gun, and he wet his lips. He tried to cry out, to tell this half-conscious adventurer that he was Lord Algy himself. But in that moment of red fury his tongue refused to carry out the duties of his brain.

Then Lord Algy heard a deafening crash. "Beware!"

It was the last sound he heard. With that crash all his faculties rolled away from him, and he fell headlong to the deck.

The three space-rafters stared in speechless horror. For they knew the truth. It was Lord Algy that Nick Chance had killed.

Overturning, by the deadly reflexing of the Master of the Moon, the famous space captain had killed the young Per.

## ★HURLED INTO THE VOID

**T**HREE red-bearded space captains stared, grim, even now, his blue eyes shined fiercely. Even the Master of the Moon caught his breath a little at his witless aspect.

"Well, there's one Moonman gone," Nick snarled. "Right between the eyes. He killed Lord Algy—and I'm glad I spared it."

The tragedy of it—the grim tragedy! Nick's space soldiers stared. They dared not tell the captain what he had done now.

The Master of the Moon laughed softly. He had contemplated a fearful vengeance upon his rival scoundrel, but his satisfaction would not be complete until Captain Nick Chance recognized that it was Lord Algy he had shot dead.

He pictured to himself the space captain's haunted conscience, and greatly stirred his head.

"You made a good job of it," he purred softly, with a devilish sparkle in his black eyes. "I owe the gun, Captain, and I thank



## Death Waits in the Sargossa of Space

you will join me, when you had not what you were doing."

"Perhaps," the grim traces of Captain Chance conveyed no pleasure.

"You'd better complete your work-by getting out of the bay," the Moon Master said. "Take it and there at all the airlock—," he added roughly.

"Good enough! I'll show all the Moon-men you like also again," Captain Nick pressed grimly.

He moved completely to have recovered his senses now, but stopping down he killed Lord Algy slowly in his arms and made down the companionship of the space liner with him.

But in the air-lock with the outer door closed against the freezing ether, Captain Nick Chance did a strange thing.

He bent down and shook the young man fiercely.

"Horn, wake up!" he cried. "I shot you, now, but the bullet was a dummy one."

Slowly Lord Algy's eyelids flickered open. Recognition dawned—was a twisted smile could be seen.

# 400 CARS in a 1,000 Mile RALLY



The Motor Test car  
Hanging and starting  
on a 100-mile of the  
test in the early  
Rally. This driver  
didn't start again!

## The R.A.C. Rally

THE cars of to-morrow are being built on the experience gained at the road races, rallies and competitions of to-day.

Reliability, performance and general efficiency of make progress as the competition becomes longer.

Races and rallies of the past have been responsible for the present-day efficiency at time and besides, the comfort of the modern car and the improvements in design.

And next Tuesday, March 18th, Britain will be the scene of the biggest competition ever held in the history of motoring.

Four main parts of the country four hundred miles a limited entry—will travel to Bournemouth by routes covering about one thousand miles.

## The Amateurs' Chance

THE competition is the R.A.C. Third Annual Rally, and it will give ordinary motorists an opportunity of showing their driving skill.

The trade is, of course, represented by its teams, but the greater percentage of competitors will be amateurs, and in their ranks are more than fifty women.

Entries are divided into three classes:

1. Cars over 16 h.p.

2. Cars under 16 h.p. but over 10 h.p.

3. Cars of 10 h.p. and under.

There are 125 h.p. cars in Class 1, 125 in Class 2, and 125 "in Class 3."

This competition takes the form of the successful completion of the road test and then a driving test, the nature of which will not be disclosed until just before the test starts. A separate restricted competition is also included.

"Hello, shipper! Think it—been having a rotten night here. Through you shot me."

"You're kidding," the famous retorted and, leaning forward and speaking earnestly. "You faced it surely. I recognized you immediately, but I bent the old fool at his own game."

"Why—why, dash it!" exclaimed Lord Algy, staring up.

Then Nick raised his head in a warning gesture. "Horn! He's coming. Don't wait! Wait the Lord yet. I've an idea. Lay down again, and I'll be back."

The space captain darted out of the air-lock and up the companionship to the upper deck.

He had heard Dr. Marlin's footsteps. The Master of the Moon had been lying on his side, waiting Captain Nick's return when he discovered what he had done.

But the red-headed space captain met him on the upper deck.

"I've got an helmet on," he growled.

"Can't open the outer door to the ether."

"Come with me," said Dr. Marlin gently, adjusting his own helmet.

He led the way. When he saw the huddled up figure of Lord Algy in the air-lock he bent down to raise him up.

"See, Captain, take another look at—"

But he got no further. Lord Algy rose Tyland came to life. The young pair leapt up and let the Master of the Moon, all the great up anger that was somewhere in him be known in that instant. He advanced like a steel spring, and laid the Master of the Moon with a resounding punch to the solar plexus.

The shatter scientist crashed down with his body sliding on the steel floor of the air-lock.

Lord Algy had no compassion or mercy now. He bent over to prowl over him, and there was something like murder in his heart.

Remember that his phosgene helmet, he noticed Captain Nick out of the way. Then he closed the inner door and slid open the outer air-lock door. Picking up Dr. Marlin bodily in his arms, he hauled him out into the frigid thickness of space.

He went over on his face and fastened in his space suit and helmet.

Lord Algy pulled off the Moon captain's costume and buried the whole thing after him.

"Dashed rotten outsider!" he roared.

"I was just about ready to kill him, y'know."

Captain Nick, who in space suit and helmet, came out and pulled Lord Algy's shoulder. He could see that he was suffering a little from shock.

"You did the right thing," he said gently as their helmets clanked. "You have got rid of a terrible menace to civilization."

## ★ IN THE DREAD SARGOSSA

A JOYOUS welcome awaited Lord Algy as he triumphantly returned with Captain Nick to the deck of the expedition space ship.

The Lord, space-suiting could not make enough of him. Submarine Fins slipped him on the back but he almost collapsed.

"You did a real job of work, y'Lordship," he said heartily. "I'm here to tell the world—yes, so."

"Nathan. Great work, eh?" agreed Lord Algy a little staidly. "But what about something to eat?"

"Yes, I go first too!" murmured Clancy and went to search of the galley.

Suddenly Nick gave vent to a soft exclamation as his eyes went to the observatory window of the space ship.

"Look!" he cried.

He threw the shutter of the observation window wide open. In the frigid thickness above they could see the floating figure of the Master of the Moon. But not only that—

The other planet ship, the *Endeavour*, was crawling around the floating body, and some of the grotesque Moon men stood at the entrance to an air-lock, one of them holding a long hooked pole with which he was fishing for the body of the Lunar Lord.

Even as Nick Chance and his crew watched broadly, the hook held in the lock of the floating Master of the Moon, and he was pulled into the air-lock.

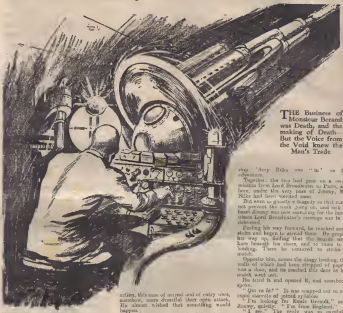
"He's all alive," he gasped, Captain Nick Chance after a moment or two.

No doubt of it. The Master of the Moon stood erect in the air-lock, and they can see him shake his fist in rage.

He's powerful for a great deal of harm yet," Captain Nick Chance growled. "And we're drifting in space—goodness knows where. Our engine won't work. We've got to watch out closely for the Master of the Moon, kids."

Can get in the room of space—the dread nightmare of the alien race. Captain Nick and his crew—where had met and met with their raising adventures in this week's powerful story of "The Master of the Moon."

# VOICE from the VOID



**THE Business of Monsieur Berand was Death, and the making of Death—But the Voice from the Void knew the Man's Trade**

## ★ DEATH IN THE DARKNESS

JIMMY buttoned his jacket and looked about him. Nothing moved, nothing breathed. Even the street air was still. There was a wicked silence on everything, as though the rue Varrenne stretched, waiting, watching, breathless with suspended expectation.

Jimmy went along looking at each door until he came to number sixteen. It was at the far end of what proved to be a narrow old do way—at the very heart of the opening, at the bottom of the trap itself.

He tapped on the door and nobody answered his tapping. The tapping seemed suddenly loud at the stillness, and caused him to look about him once more, as though the noise of it might have awoken some stealthy intruder of the unseen place.

He pushed the door. It gave under his hand, and there yawned before him the pitch black void of a narrow entrance passage. He stopped briefly. It was the lowest thing Jimmy had ever done.

Nobody challenged him. This lack of sound, this entire absence of aggressive

action, this ease of arrival and of entry into, somehow, more dreadful than open attack. He almost wished that something would happen.

For Jimmy, nephew of Lord Broadwater, the Foreign Secretary, was on Secret Service work, and peril was waiting for him at every step.

Looking for a job of work, he had contacted his uncle, and as a result had been sent searching for a Phantom ship that had been seen on the East's side of the Thames Estuary, and its investigate strange group of a Voice, a mysterious Voice that spoke out of Nowhere, above the whistle of the wind, thundering out over the nose of the sea.

It all sounded a little odd, but Jimmy was a whale for mystery, and already he had seen and heard things on the lonely saltings that spoke of terror and mystery.

He had seen the Phantom Ship—a strange ghost vessel that came out of the mists and disappeared again into nothingness. He had heard the Voice, too—a Voice from the Void that came roaring as from a thousand tongues in strange places and out of Nowhere!

Then Jimmy had met 'Avery Binks, a regular old soldier who was staying on the coast for the good of his health.

A stray dog on the saltings, stricken for Jimmy, had caught Mr. Binks' lower leg and the accident had occurred the frigid

day 'Avery Binks was "in" on the adventure.

Together, the two had gone on a secret mission from Lord Broadwater to Paris, and here, under the very nose of Jimmy, Mr. Binks had been wanted none.

But even so, Jimmy was happy as that could not prevent the work going on, and such at heart Jimmy was now searching for the house where Lord Broadwater's remains was to be delivered.

Pushing his way forward, he reached some stairs and began to ascend them. He gripped his way up, feeling that the boards were less beneath his shoes, and so came to a landing. There he ventured to strike a match.

Opposite him, across the dingy landing, the walls of which had been stripped of paper, was a door, and he reached this door as his match went out.

He tried it and opened it, and somebody spoke.

"Qui es-tu?" It was muffled out in one rapid syllable of jargon syllables.

"I'm looking for Emma through," said Jimmy, quietly. "I'm from England."

"I see." The reply was in curiously accented English. "You are at the door, eh? I cannot see you."

"Yes," said Jimmy, and found his brain suddenly gripped with blinding precision. As he spoke he dropped on his face, and the gunshot that boomed in the enclosed space of the room burst itself in the wood of the door, while Jimmy went forward on his hands and knees as best he could.

There was a click. An electric lamp flicked. Jimmy came to that lamp held. Heeded the lighted above it, and the people got home fearfully. There was a gasp. Something moved and stirred...

Electric lamp dropped. Darkness came down on that room of dark things. A scuffle over Jimmy's back. A yell, gone that his own gasped for a dropped gasp. Jimmy stopped, gripped something, pushed again.

Then, terror, he tripped across that dark tunnel and came full length beside it.

The moaning thing spoke in a drifting, dying whisper.

"I am... Death... They found me. No use. The lady... Jacques... Avenue Paris..." A curious word reached Jimmy's ears. Had he ever broken a little field he would have known the awful ap-  
point-

much. "Knife. Gently would never speak again."

But the man who had slain Goudi, the man who would have killed Jimmy, was at the door. Jimmy heard the quick scuffle of his feet and realized that he, too, had heard what Goudi had breathed with the last breath he drew on earth.

In the darkness Jimmy went blundering towards the door. He guessed a wall, groped frantically sideways. Feet were scuffling on the bare stairs—creeping feet; and the man who owned those creeping feet knew the name and address of Jacques Bonard.

Jimmy's hand touched the door knob, and he pulled himself round it and came to the landing. His descent of the stairs was cautious and fast. He slid down the balustrade. His gaited yards on his man by this moment—yards and yards—and as the fellow halted into the comparative light of the street, Jimmy saw him and saw which way he turned.

From that moment there was only one end to the chase, for Jimmy's spending powers were of a high order. Into a narrow alley he dove the fugitive, and after him came Jimmy. In the alley the man turned at bay, face fixed, eyes staring.

Jimmy saw the quick death stare of steel. He saw a hard clenched hand sweep up. He ducked and jumped backwards. The wicked steel whined, and Jimmy hit his man flat in the mouth and scuttled him to the back of the wall. Before he could lever himself from it, Jimmy hit him again, and the battle was won and lost.

A sharp downward tread of Jimmy's right foot snapped the knife at its hilt as it lay on the stone. Jimmy got the man by the collar and shook him.

"You talk English," he said. "Don't deny it, or I'll deny you so that your friends won't know you. You let go hold of a friend of mine today. Where is he?"

"What is?" asked the man. "That is an honest hearted fellow."

"I'll be sure out of you in a couple of seconds," said Jimmy grimly. "Speak up."

A warning far beyond satisfactorily near the man's already damaged face. He looked wiser for a moment, then spoke with reluctance.

"We hold him a prisoner in a house in the Rue du Douai. I can take you there if you wish. But I am willing to warn you that the house is not empty."

"It will be when I'm done," said Jimmy, shortly. "Lead on, MacDuff. I don't think that's right, but it suits the name."

The man led reluctantly. Jimmy held his arm and talked to him as they walked, and what Jimmy talked about was all that would happen to his prisoner if the fellow had led to him. As the man was a coward, he was prepared to find Jimmy a murderer, too, and he believed all Jimmy told him.

They crossed the great boulevard, along which and down with light, and they came to the end of the Rue du Douai, he led the prisoner and pointedly parallel with it.

The man pointed to a tall house, shattered and lifeless like all his kind.

"In there," he said, and his eyes glinted slightly. He added: "And not above."

"I see. I suppose you're wondering what I'm going to do now, eh?"

The man laughed. "I am willing to watch you try."

Jimmy hit him. It was a clean and wicked back on the point, and the man dropped in a heap. Jimmy bent over him. He was out, and likely to be out for some minutes.

Jimmy dragged him into the middle of the road and left him, knowing that a policeman would find him and would probably take him to the station for some kind of questioning.

There were minutes when Jimmy could think of the man's faded. His man had not seemed so that.

Then Jimmy went straight up to the door of the slender dark house and banged the bell.

The door, he noticed, was a beautiful door, like so many in Montmartre, a splendid and noble piece of wood with some rather nice carving as it was. He could hear the ring of the bell which was of the gold variety—away in the depths of the house; but nobody answered it.

He rang again, and waited, and still there was no answer.

A policeman wandered along. He saw the doorman was in the road. He saw Jimmy and started to question him. Jimmy said he spoke to Goudi. He suggested to say this, he knew nothing in French. The policeman blew a whistle. Another policeman arrived. A taxi was brought. From the very front of the house the man was whisked away, and Jimmy hunched again after having given his name and hotel to the police.

But all this had caused some commotion. The police whistle had been heard. Doors opened. Jimmy looked in a shadow by the beautiful door and waited.

There was a little chatter. The taxi had vanished. Nothing moved in the street, and those who had opened their doors began to close them.

And then, just as Jimmy was deciding that his look was out, the beautiful door of the exterior house was cautiously pulled open a foot and a face peeped out.

For a single fraction of a second Jimmy stared at that face, while the owner of the face, seeing him dimly in the darkness, stared at him.

And then they stood motionless, progressing one another, unable to move from their amazement.

For then was Baldy, the bald-headed killer whom Jimmy had first encountered on the lonely suburbs of the Etoile road.

Baldy.

## ★THE FIGHT ON THE STAIRS

IT was Baldy right enough. But Jimmy moved first and Jimmy moved decisively. He leapt forward. His right hand went under Baldy's chin and got a grip of that smooth person's throat, a grip which dug thumb and finger into Baldy's windpipe with agonizing effectiveness and rendered the severe tongue silent.

Baldy was dragged forward as to the door step. He tried to hit Jimmy, but the grip on his throat tightened, his eyes jumped forward as though pulled from behind, and his tongue jelled horribly. Baldy was as now being choked as ever he had been in all his evil life.

"Listen," hissed Jimmy. "If my friend is there? And if he is, I'll have your life if you don't answer."

Baldy continued to nod. Jimmy reached past him and gently pulled the door to within an actually inching it. Then he dragged Baldy two or three paces up the street and into a deep and dark doorway.

The relentless grip as he went had released Baldy to helplessness and fear. He saw himself being choked and horribly struggled in that dark doorway, and he made

Jimmy sent a clean and wicked hook to the man's jaw and he dropped in a heap.



another effort to struggle, an effort which brought him a punch on the side of the head that rattled him from nose to toe. After that he submitted to his fate.

Jimmy rapidly ran his bare hand over him and found a gas. He put the gas into his own pocket and, relaxing his grip, let Baldy breathe, which he did in long, rattling gasps, clanking at his neck the while.

Then he spoke. He began to swear at Jimmy. Jimmy let him have a half-arm jab in the "belly, a sly and sudden punch that brought the marinating devil half double with pain.

"I'm talking," said Jimmy. "You're listening and answering questions. And if you try and trick me I'll march you up and then hand you over to the police on a charge of murder."

"Listen!"—"added Baldy. "I don't want to. My friend's in that house, isn't he?"

"Yes, but —"

"Right," Jimmy ignored the interruption. "What room is he in?"

"The top room at the back," Baldy spoke suddenly. "At least, he was when I came to the door."

"What does that mean?" asked Jimmy. Baldy hesitated. He had suddenly said more than he intended. Jimmy immediately handed him to the side of the head. He could not forget that dying man who cowered to his language door, and he had no sympathy at all for Baldy.

"One more chance," added Baldy. "Don't keep hitting me, for heaven's sake."

"I don't if you behave. Come on, speak up."

"We . . . they were going to question him. That's all. Two of them went up far him as I came to the door. We'd heard the police whistle and we wondered what it might mean."

"I see. They think he knows something, and they want to know what it is."

"Yes."

"Right. Now I'm going into that house, Baldy, and —"

"There are six men in it!" gasped Baldy. "That's bad luck for them," growled Jimmy.

"You're coming with me, and in order to spare that my entry is unopposed you're going to call out as we go through the door. You'll call out to each of your friends by name and tell him a street fight was taking place, that the police have closed it up, and that everything is now O.K. If you want to speak French to him you can, because I can talk the language like a native and will understand all you say. Move!"

The dead Baldy was propelled into the street, never doubting Jimmy's utterance claim to a complete knowledge of the French language. They reached the disordered door of the sinister house. Baldy stopped in at Jimmy's side and, as Jimmy wringed him, he yelled: "George! George!"

A voice from somewhere in the house yelled back: "Georges!"

"It's all right," cried Baldy. "A tramp in the street. The cops are gone."

He spoke the language of the other words, and Jimmy did not understand a single word he said; but he was able to appreciate the reply of Georges, which was short and easy. "C'est bon!"

Whereupon Jimmy gently pulled Baldy backward in the doorway, said more and asked him as vigorously as he had asked the abuser of Earth's Grass.

He left Baldy in the street to be picked up by the police, and thus provide them with a dual mystery, and he gently closed the door and stood alone in the dim light of the outer impinging and wide entrance passageway.

It was as he stood thus that he heard a voice. The voice was singing. At least, the owner of the voice would probably have had the audacity to call it singing. Actually it sounded like an electric train taking a steep curve. It sang a song to a walk-knew tone, a long that was sung when Jimmy was prattling nursery rhymes.

When this blood was in me,  
Oh, how happy I shall be;  
When I get my navy clothes on  
No more soldiering for me.  
No more making of rascals,  
No more going down on knees,  
Then I'll tell the sergeant-major . . .

Fortunately, the singer was never allowed to reach the point where he is furnished the word what he intended to tell the sergeant-major.

There was a crash. The voice of Mr. Binks ran high.

"Take that, you son of a quarter-master-sergeant!"

A howl, followed, and Jimmy's eyes glared. Mr. Binks, he was pleased to find, was no model prisoner. In deed, he was obviously proving himself to be the proverbial hard-boiled hands left in fact.

The words all came from above.



stairs, and Jimmy anxiously swept that way. He suspected a story or two had happened on the scene of battle.

A man was sitting against the wall on the landing Jimmy reached. He had a lantern back in his eyes and a dark blue badge on his jaw. It was quite obvious that he did not know whether he was in Paris or having a slide on a roundabout. He probably guessed it to be the latter.

Another man came staggering down the stairs holding his head. A gas went off. Something hurtled through the air from above. It was the end of a stone. It took the staggering man with a wicked shoving movement in the back of the head, and he dropped like a log.

There was the disordered line of beated feet on the stair carpet. The gas went off again. Mr. Binks' voice lifted high. What is called a riching that reached Jimmy's ears.

A man rolled right down the flight of stairs and stopped only because he reached the bottom. He lay spread-eagled.

What Mr. Binks was up to Jimmy did not know; but that he was definitely up to something was obvious.

Swinging his deadly metal weapon, Mr. Binks came crashing down the stairs. "Jimmy!" he burst out.

Jimmy pulled out Baldy's gas and fired it three times in rapid succession through the ceiling of the landing.

Instantly the war above ceased and was below began. The attackers came pell-mell down the stairs. Jimmy had no desire to shoot a man with an automatic pistol. It is, after all, the weapon of the coward and the kind killer.

There were only three of them, for Mr. Binks had already accounted for the other three. They saw Jimmy and came at him. But only was on Jimmy's side—help from above.

He heard a tremendous and exultant yell. "JIMMY!"

And Mr. Binks was coming down the stairs swinging a stone that deadly weapon—nothing less than one of the two slender metal parts of the frame of an iron bedstead.

It was a club of the most deadly description, and Jimmy began to understand. He only had but so much to rescue Mr. Binks. The people who wanted rescuing were Mr. Binks' captives.

They had a perfectly satisfying time of it and then. The iron weapon smashed one of them in the face. Jimmy looked the gas ran evenly to a knock-out before he could pull a trigger. The third man got up his arms and asked for mercy.

Mr. Binks looked him over.

## The Voice Speaks of Death

"Just one walk," he said to Jimmy. "Just one . . ." His voice held a note of pleading, and with his left hand he carefully covered back his right ear.

The man frowned. Jimmy said, "No, he lets up and tell me all about it."

They had their man up and Mr. Ellis called as they did so.

"You see, when that Frenchy let me I went down. I was as near out to nothing, and couldn't help myself, though I remember what they call me. I was dragged into the house quick, and I know that I couldn't do anything, what with my head and feet. It was wearing a hunter at that time, too. I always did never by a hunter."

"I know," grinned Jimmy. "Well . . ."

"I pretended I was right out, and they, like I said, put me into that bedroom up there. It was two chairs, a good dressing table, and as was indicated. I spent my time taking the clothes to bed and putting the back and legs out of the chair . . . all ready for bed, you see."

Jimmy nodded solemnly. "How was detection plan received which he could appreciate."

After a lapse of time, as they sat, continued Mr. Ellis. "You see, in fact, they came for me, and I saw for them, so to speak. I hid that lighter over there across the wall with the bedstead bed. There was only two of 'em, and the other one wanted for his pain before I could let him. But while he was gone I dragged the dressing table out and put it across the top of the stairs on the side, and as they came up I pulled 'em with bits of the bedstead and bits of the stairs. We had a fine old time, but we tell you. It was worth waiting. Then you came. What do you do now?"

"Search the place," said Jimmy. "As they did this he related his own experience. The house yielded them nothing. It looked to Jimmy, in fact, as though it had been burned through, which, indeed, was the truth. It was the case to the mysterious appearance against which they fought."

They came out to the street. Ruby had disappeared—rather into the hands of the police or whether of her own accord, Jimmy did not know.

"What do you do now?" asked Mr. Ellis. "Go to bed?"

"No," said Jimmy. "We don't see. We're going to the Avenue Foch."

"What's that?"

"One of the finest streets in Europe," replied Jimmy. "Come on."

And Mr. Ellis, nodding his rather bald, round head but firmly on his head, came.

### \* WARNING FROM THE VOICE

THE Avenue Foch, especially called the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne and renamed after the famous French Marshal, runs from the North to the Porte Daumesnil in the western quarter of Paris.

It is undoubtedly one of the finest thoroughfares in the world. Lined with trees and greenery, it commands the picture of the immediately city.

On the way Jimmy found a telephone booth and looked up Jacques Bernad and so discovered that gentleman's exact address in the Frenchy neighborhood.

They also called in at one of the multi-storied multi-cubes in a new street and took some refreshment, of which they were both badly in need.

They finished, they went on. A taxi dropped them at the Hotel, and standing in the shadow of the great Arc de Triomphe, with the wonderful outburst of words ringing from its old doorway, they passed by a little while.

"This is the place," said Jimmy. "Is Mr. Bernad in here or not? Was poor Bernad trying to tell me that Bernad could give me the information I came to get, or was he warning me that Bernad is a man to fear? On that depends our next move."

Mr. Ellis was not gifted for the deeper thinking, and he made no reply.

"Well chance it, shall we?" said Jimmy to Ellis.

"Anything you like," agreed Mr. Ellis. "They sat out."

They found the villa of Monsieur Jacques Bernad. It stood in a beautiful garden surrounded by a white wall into which were set a tall pair of magnificent ornamental cast-iron gates.

The villa itself was square and pure white, with flower boxes at its windows, and with colored awnings over them—blue down on because of sunlight. The whole place was delightfully light and airy looking, graceful and delicious, and spoke of innocent wealth.

"Come show," said Mr. Ellis. "Do we ring the bell?"

"Yes, but we do," agreed Jimmy, and walked up the sweeping drive, climbed the

## SCIENCE in CRIME DETECTION

Scotland Yard can tell you the age of a fingerprint

THE age of a fingerprint is often of the greatest importance in establishing innocence or guilt when a case stands around of a crime—and may even mean life or death to a man charged with murder.

In a recent court case it was revealed by a Scotland Yard fingerprint expert that a very clever criminal exists for detecting the age of a fingerprint, and it would be possible to identify and tell the age of a print made many years previously.

The powder which is applied to finger prints to bring them out will stick to the ridges of a new print, but old prints will be dry, and the powder will not adhere to it.

A fresh print can be removed by a doctor, but a doctor's hand has to be used to remove a stale mark, as the old prints are technically treated.

The expert from the Fingerprint Department at Scotland Yard also revealed that they have filed at the Yard the fingerprints of half a million people, making about five million prints in all.

In spite of this it is possible for the finger print man to find a print in the records in less than thirty seconds to half an hour.

three marble steps, and rang the bell.

A glass door within was opened. The house gave without was also opened.

A footman presented himself and said politely, "Monsieur?"

"I would like to see Monsieur Bernad," said Jimmy. "He must know my name, but perhaps you would tell him that Monsieur André Gervais, musician, has called."

The footman hesitated a moment and then asked three ladies.

They found themselves in a marble-floored hall in the middle of which a fountain sang gently, its water falling into an ornamental pool where goldfish flashed and darted.

The footman returned and conducted them to a white and gold salon in which a man stood with his back to the empty fireplace. He was a short and thickset man with black hair, a clipped black mustache and a hard face.

"What is all this?" he said sharply.

"I am all this," he spoke English with a trace of accent.

Jimmy stood in silence.

"Give some from Monsieur Gervais," said Jimmy. "He asked me to tell you that you could speak to me with confidence. That is all. He said it would be enough."

"I see," Bernad stretched his square chin with a white hand. "Very remarkable, young man. But of what am I to speak?"

"I believe Gervais thought you would know."

"But I don't," smiled Bernad. "The fact is, to say the least of it, rather awkward. Of a nature very surprising, in fact. You need an excuse. You arrive late, even for Paris. You mention a gentleman named Gervais." He paused. "I have never heard of André Gervais."

This was a fact. Bernad was speaking slowly. His eyes were twinkling slightly, as though he had humorously enjoyed a rather foolish joke.

"But Gervais—" began Jimmy unconsciously.

"Ah, this Gervais," smiled Bernad. "That is it. Now perhaps you will explain to me the matter which took you to Monsieur Bernad—wherever he might be. Then I may make what slight connection I have with the business."

Jimmy hesitated. How might he be a trap. There might be a definite piece of perjury, a desire to hide out what he himself knew, and while he hesitated a minute was made in the white and gold salon of Monsieur Jacques Bernad.

The Voice from the Voice spoke. It spoke out of nothingness. It spoke in silence, rolling from that fixed the great and beautiful room.

"The matter in question, Bernad, is Death and the Making of Death."

Mr. Ellis groaned. "The Voice from the Voice!" It was his first contribution to the argument.

Bernad had stopped back a pace, as though confronted by some fearful thing. His cheeks had pale slightly, and he stared steadily about as if he sought for that which spoke.

It spoke again.

"I speak carefully, Bernad . . . carefully. And remember that the wages of war is death." Then it asked: "You two gentlemen who have called on me this day, you two who appear to be fatigued and physical exhaustion you can expect that while I alone can accomplish, but better late than never you are safe; for the white villa of Monsieur Bernad is a black speck in the air of the creation of the world."

"I'm off," said Mr. Ellis suddenly.

He moved towards the door.

"Stop! Please, Gentlemen, Alphonse . . ."

shouted Bernad.

Jimmy followed Mr. Ellis with a rush. They swept into the marble-floored hall, they then across it. They encountered the footman and they hurried him into the kitchen among the goldfish; they then open door and looked into, and they can across the flower-bed in the street again.

They reached the beautiful sunset and they ran and ran until they pealed up breathless beneath the Arc de Triomphe.

"That," said Mr. Ellis, "is what I call a job. Jimmy, I've gone home. I am enough. I have a better one. The white villa Gervais and Alphonse Bernad, as the saying goes, men tell in tales. Let's get to bed and sleep in it."

"I think you're right," agreed Jimmy, and stopped the first taxi that came along. It swung them down to the Opera district and their hotel and they retired in the footman with his single back which Jimmy had moved against the time when he hoped Mr. Ellis would see him.

They had had a good day. They had travelled from London to Paris, they had seen death and escape and nothingness, plus Monsieur Bernad, and they had found the Voice from the Voice. But as Jimmy did down the long white steps of sleep he made up his mind that he had not talked with the white villa in the Avenue Foch.

Curiously enough, Monsieur Bernad was at the same square.

Once more the Voice from the Voice had spoken of death and the Making of Death. Something about death and death and Mr. Ellis in the black dress of Monsieur Bernad. And now work's starting tomorrow in this powerful story.

# HERE'S A SCOOP

## Foretelling the Future

**A** WAVE of intense interest in the future is spreading round the world. Almost every newspaper and popular periodical and magazine now picks up to-day carries an article on the future, or has some comment to make on the accepted heights of space and the planets.

There are those who maintain that human history itself will never be a possibility; others are equally certain that such things will not only be a possibility but will be an accomplished fact before many years have passed.

There also can be told. Meanwhile, it may be good to exercise our imaginations as to what lies in wait for the daring pioneers who will endeavour to wrest the secrets of these vast regions.

A reader writes: "The imagination is one of the greatest factors in human progress, and this, coupled with a scientific mind, can produce results which, to-day, are only possibilities to be aspired to."

What the future can hold one only can guess at by daring authors such as will appear in the pages of *SCOOPS*. Eventually these will grow up a generation used to looking beyond the facts of to-day to consider the possibilities of to-morrow.

We heartily endorse our reader's view. As the hourly paper of to-morrow we shall look into the future with imagination, bringing to our service all the known facts.



## If the Rain Stopped

**A**S an instance of the latest newspaper writers are taking in scientific notions of Dismutation, Mr. Sunday Nabels, writing recently in the *Sunday Chronicle*, and the absence of rain had an idea of a digit of future. He began to consider what might happen if it never rained again.

There is an H. G. Wells' fantasy for you, if you like!

Just now industries would spring up. The preservation of the world of man would be devoted to distilling drinking-water from the sea.

There would be plague and famine. An entirely new system of diet would have to be devised for mankind.

The lakes would yield up their secrets, and the rivers be turned into highways—provided that there were any people surviving to drive along them.

It is just as well to know one's mind occasionally by these speculative exercises, if only because by doing so we may have to be grateful for as many things which, in the ordinary course of affairs, we take for granted.

## When the Sun Went Out

**C**ONTINUING his flight of fancy Mr. Nabels next imagined that instead of the days beginning to brighten after December 22nd they began to shorten until the world was plunged into perpetual darkness.

What a strange time of things would these people live under! (write Mr. Nabels).

What inventive energies would be devoted towards the formation of artificial sun!

And how useless and pathetic would sound, to our descendants, the histories of mankind today.

We should appear as gods to them, seeing us a divine civilization which was perpetually renewed.

And all the more impossible in them would seem the strife, the blood, and

## What would happen—

# If the WORLD ran DRY?

the poverty which we had chosen, when all we had to do was to lie back and look at God's sunlight.

I sincerely hope that neither of these fancies is likely to be substantiated.

But the publisher will agree that we have had a fair forecast of the first, and the long-sighted townsman will agree that he can, at least, imagine the advent of the second.

## Motoring's Jubilee

**1934** marks the Jubilee of Motoring.

It is just fifty years ago since a German engineer, Gottlieb Daimler, applied for a patent for a petrol engine with a spark ignition and the rights of an engine were bought by a British firm.

Fifty years ago . . . and now there are over five million motor vehicles travelling the roads of Britain every day.

The R.A.C. Rally, which we describe in a special article on page 136, will do much to show the progress that has been made since the day when those strange old crooked made their way in a series of jumps and jerks behind a man carrying a red flag.

## Racing Thrills for Britain

**T**HE entry list for the R.A.C. Rally was limited to 400 cars, and had to be closed weeks before the competitors. Hundreds of our owners had their applications turned down. This record entry is a sign of the growing interest in motor sport in Great Britain.

It only requires one or two good road races in the country, and Britain will be able to provide motorist sport as good as, if not better than, that of the Continent.

And road racing is coming. This year the first road race ever held on the mainland of Britain, may take place in Brighton.

The scheme has been made possible by the efforts of the Brighton and Hove Motor Club, in co-operation with the British Association, and the place only await Parliamentary sanction.

A section of the town, covering a course of 4½ miles, with the Aqueduct corner as the

starting point, has been planned and tested, and motorists desire that speeds of 120 and 140 m.p.h. will be possible.

The Brighton Council already has power to close sections of the proposed course, and if the necessary bill can be passed through Parliament some of thousands of spectators may see the first road race in Britain from the natural grandstand on the Brighton Downs.

## Race for a Butterfly

**T**HE race of albatross and osprey is not dead.

Here's a man—and a Britman, too—spending £5,000 in a race with an American scientific expedition to discover a new species of butterfly.

The man is Mr. William MacQueen, a keen ornithologist, and when he heard that the Hudson Government was attempting a proposed search for the butterfly he stopped to see with the necessary cash.

The butterfly has been seen in the Azores territory, starting Chilean Patagonia, and the British expedition hopes to beat the American party.

Being gone—25,000!

## Man Takes Wings

**H**IS friend—the man who takes wings and flies by means of his own mechanical power!

At least, he's nearly arrived. . . . Arthur, inventor, a 60-year-old Cornish chemist, has been flown with a pair of wings made of bamboo and linen and operated by himself.

Witnesses report that he mounted a crazy tower of poles and planks and swung into space.

Instead of crashing, he flew through the air like a huge bat, and, when he was tired, glided down to earth upon a pair of legs.

We may all fly like birds yet. . . .

## Schoolboy Flyers

**T**RAINING Britain is beginning to be aviation—the new hobby man of the 20th century—private enterprise is by no means negligible.



This summer the Norwich Aero Club are preparing to "open position" fly.

Groups for parties of thirty schoolboys are to be held on the aerodrome during the holidays, and each party will be given a full course in aviation.

The cost will be £20 per head, and the syllabus has been sent to all the big schools. None of the boys will be able to obtain his flying certificate, for it is the minimum age for a flyer, but they will all be able to pass out in the "A" flying license exam, and then take out the full license when they reach 17.

Catching 'em young!

## Sounds So Loud You Can't Hear Them

**T**HAT looks a crazy statement—but nevertheless it's the cold truth.

There are some sounds so high and loud that human ears cannot hear them.

This amazing fact has been used by one of our authors in a story which we are publishing in next week's *SCOOPS*.

The scientist in the tale grins a bit, but he no longer is a scientist. For the sound is as great, such a blinding bombardment of noise, that it causes beings to fall, Nature's orders to come tumbling down in a thousand crashing pieces.

You'll enjoy "The Fall of Death." It's a thriller!

# SCOOPS

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# The WORLD of VAPOUR

**CAUGHT IN THE VORTEX of a whirlpool and hurled to the bed of the Atlantic, to a strange region of Red Mist, a terrifying World of Vapour**

## ★WHIRLPOOL OF THE DEPTHS

**T**HE great shell of shimmering metal was slowly lowered towards the choppy waves of the Atlantic Ocean. The trapped boat bent down upon it so that it resembled a glimmering ball of steel.

In a periscope vision two men standing inside her watched the descent.

"Dick," called one of them, a middle-aged man with keen grey eyes and high, nobly forked, "I can hardly realize that at last we've started. In a few more minutes we shall know what lies a mile beneath the sea."

Dick Ranger smiled back at the other man. He knew that Sir Ian Forgyth had been planning for this moment for months, even years.

This twenty-foot sphere, containing only a Forgyth's own invention, was the realization of a life's ambition. In it he hoped to penetrate far beneath the Atlantic Ocean for the purpose of investigating the mysterious fauna of unknown depths.

To this end he had equipped the sphere with distinguishing sodium rays. The stream of lances-up above forming the rays could be directed upon the water from any point on the surface of the sphere. When set in use minute water-tight metal covers protected the ray outlets.

Alternating with these were other holes, much larger in diameter and likewise protected from the sea by metal covers. Taken from the outside for the compressed air taken by the use of which the sphere could leave its way to the surface again.

The intricate machinery necessary to produce the sodium rays and compressed air, together with the oxygen apparatus and electric generator, was housed in the base of the sphere.

The steel shell had been constructed over a bed of thickness in order to resist the pressure of the water at great depths. In the air was a small, perfectly fitting door, the only exit.

Back in Sir Ian Forgyth's laboratory in London, it had been shipped aboard the *Arcturion*. A special hull had been constructed to ensure that the delicate instruments concerned should be unharmed during the voyage.

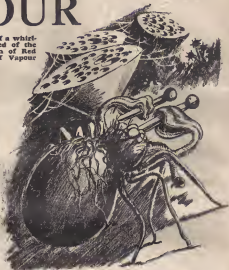
Now, after months of preparation, the *Arcturion* had reached her destination, some two hundred miles north of the West Indies, and the experiment had begun.

For a few seconds only the sphere remained above the surface; then, as it disappeared, nothing but a swirl of spray, disintegrating waves marked the spot where it had been.

The two men inside stood tense, eyes fixed on the dial readings of the various instruments.

"Better switch on the sodium rays," said Forgyth after a moment or two. "We must see quicker than this if we are to return to the *Arcturion* before daylight."

Ranger pulled a lever and the metal floor began to vibrate. A powerful humming note



reached their ears. The devastating stress of emergent currents crashed into the water beneath splitting up the molecules into a myriad atoms.

A groans arose opened up beneath the sphere. And into this it slid, by virtue of gravity and the weight of water above.

Here, ever downwards it blazed its way, until Ranger, standing before the depth indicator, called out, "Six hundred fathoms."

Forgyth did not reply. He was too preoccupied in peering through the periscope at the queer, luminous fish which abounded at that depth.

Suddenly the luminous needle swept round to the eight hundred fathoms mark—nearly a mile beneath the surface—and the creature became freer in motion. The pressure at this depth was even too great for the thick bodies of the deep sea fish.

"Amazing! Amazing, Ranger," beamed Forgyth. "The luminous creatures from some of the *Jaws* I have seen are remarkably interesting."

He had hardly spoken the words when the sphere began suddenly to rock from side to side with a swaying movement which Ranger at the controls was unable to correct.

The orient's high forehead puckered into a frown.

"Strange," he muttered; "we must have struck some powerful undersea current."

"It's getting worse," said Ranger un-

usually. "I'll put her at full throttle and see if we can get down."

He swung the lever, but with the increased speed the sphere rocked still more violently.

A moment later the waves danger gathered the steel shell into its clutches as though it had been a cork, for it was a gigantic whirlpool which had arisen—a swirling pillar of water—from the depths of the Atlantic!

With white face and staring eyes Forgyth saw the green-black water swirl around at an alarming rate. Ranger managed to switch off the compressed air before he was thrown heavily against the metal shell.

Now, caught in the swirl of water, the sphere began to spin at an ever increasing speed.

"My God!" cried Forgyth. He had been torn away from the periscope and was clung at the smooth metal of the side in an attempt to keep his feet. "Dubois a miracle happens this is the end!"

The younger man nodded sadly.

The sphere was rotating at an ever-increasing speed. Instruments were flying about.

The dial of the pressure gauge lurched across the chamber and struck the opposite a glancing blow on the forehead. He dropped like a log.

Attempting to stagger across to him, Ranger was thrown head first against the side of the vessel.



The hideous beast pressed the two metal tubes to the head, and some eddying force caught the two men in its deadly grip. They staggered and fell.



Then the sphere was caught in the vortex of the gigantic whirlpool! Spinning madly, it went hurtling towards the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean nearly three miles below.

### ★ DEVIL BEAST OF THE UNDERSEA WORLD

WHEN Dick Ranger recovered consciousness his first impression was that of an intense ache which racked his whole body.

He opened his eyes fearfully. The interior of the metal ball was in a chronic state of disorder. Metal lay everywhere, twisted and bent in chaotic confusion. Receptive instruments were apparently destroyed.

He passed his hand dazedly across his forehead. How long had he been unconscious? Where had the sphere come to rest? So low—where was he?

The young man gazed around, and there saw that Ferozyl lay directly behind him. He was bleeding from a cut in his forehead, but his heavy breathing told Ranger that the scientist was still alive.

Shakily, Ranger dragged himself to his feet and staggered towards the periscope.

He gazed into the screen, and immediately his eyes widened in amazement.

He was gazing through water, but the lower half of the sphere was not in the water. It was enveloped by a red mist, beneath which was solid rock.

He gazed curiously at the mist for some moments before he realized that it was vapor which lay over the ocean bed, and several thousands of feet below.

A vaporous region four miles beneath the sea?

It was unbelievable. It was fantastic. Yet it was undoubtedly there—a vaporous mist spread over the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, a vapour which evidently had the power to repel water!

Ranger dismissed these apparently ridiculous thoughts from his mind and turned his attention to the concrete realities about him. He realized that since only half of the

sphere was in the vapour it must obviously have come to rest upon something solid ten feet or so beneath the surface.

Suddenly they were resting on the outside of some rocky prominence rising from the bed of the Atlantic. If this was so, the steel door to the lower half of the sphere would press directly into the red atmosphere.

"Question us," muttered Ranger, "in the usual breathless! Are we faced with the alternative of starving to death in here or opening the door and being suffocated?"

"Neither, I hope," replied a voice at his elbow. "Have you tried the controls, Ranger?"

"Why, sir?" asked Ranger turning round in surprise. "I don't know you'd come in. Are you feeling all right?"

The scientist smiled readily. "A bit groggy perhaps. But it will soon pass. Where the devil are we?"

"Guesses known," said Ranger. "Just take a look in that periscope while I tackle the controls. Then perhaps you can tell me whether I'm dreaming or not."

The older man peered into the periscope screen, and Dick smiled grimly as he saw the look of astonishment on the other's face.

Then, turning his attention to the maze of twisted machinery, he set to work. Five minutes later he glanced up triumphantly.

"We're in luck. All the machinery is unharmcd," he called excitedly. "But I switch on the compressed air and measure the flow of the vapour!"

Ferozyl turned away from the periscope and looked at Ranger thoughtfully.

"You're sure we can rise whenever we want?" he asked.

"Yes. There's nothing wrong with the machinery itself. Of course, the gyroscopes is doubtful," he added, looking critically at a tangled heap of metal at the door. "but I think we can keep her in at even lock. Anyway, we shall have to risk it."

A faint flash crept into the scientist's was clearly. "If what you say is right," he said slowly, "we can afford to take our time before sitting off again. Meanwhile, I propose we explore these vaporous regions."

"Explains?"

"Why not? If this vapour is breathable what is to prevent us leaving the sphere and descending as to the ocean bed below?"

There was an excited gleam in Ranger's eyes as Sir Ian began to operate the mechanism

which would enable that two-ton door of steel to be opened.

In less than half a minute it was done, and a thin stream of the red vapour came writhing in.

The scientist swept it cautiously and then, finding as all efforts failed deeply. Ranger did likewise, and each looked at the other apprehensively.

"The gas was harmless!"

"Must be composed of some reddish, inert gas capable of repelling water," said Ferozyl. "Anyway there's enough oxygen mixed with it to support life. Here go!"

He opened the door wider and the vapour forced its way into the sphere.

Leaving out Ferozyl looked about him and saw at once why they had come to rest in such a peculiar position. The sphere was copped in a slight depression on the peak of a mountain, which reached to within ten feet of the junction of vapour and water.

But for this they would certainly have found themselves on the ocean bed itself and well out of the water, with no possible chance of repelling the surface. As it was, it would be as easy water to leave the sphere and to climb down the sides of the mountain as to the bed of the ocean.

Both men stepped out and stood for a moment gazing down the rocky slopes to the black ground far below. Before them stretched the red vapour, transparent in spite of its coloring. Away in the distance rose other rocky summits.

Picking their way carefully, they descended the mountain, the top of which was worn smooth as if the sea had scoured about it recently. Lower down, tufts of black vegetation stood on hills long, mossy grass sprouted here and there.

Half an hour later, as they drew nearer to the ocean bed, they were able to see that the black vegetation covered most of the ground.

Here and there grew enormous trees, many of them three hundred feet high, with long slender trunks and covered with a wealth of purplish-red foliage. The leaves were thick and fleshy and gave forth a peculiar scent that the two men had noted on leaving the sphere.

"I've an idea, Ranger," mused Ferozyl, "that this atmosphere is a natural mixture of gases which has come up from the within the Earth's crust throughout the ages. Minute quantities of such a vapour might easily form their way up into our own atmosphere to be immediately dispersed and therefore undetected. But here, trapped by the sea, such a gas has probably been able to accumulate for thousands of years."

As they went on they saw a spot on the ocean bed, perhaps a quarter of a mile away, where a blinding beam of light shone directly upwards towards the water. It was reflected in a flood of redness down again towards the ground.

"Very clever," muttered Ferozyl. "See the idea, huh? The mixture of water and vapour forms an excellent mirror which reflects the rays. It begins to look as though we shall find intelligent beings down here."

Ranger smiled and pointed to the left.

"What do you make that out to be, sir?" he inquired. "Looks like a colony of an inverted metal cone."

They crept down to the foot of the mountain and then walked towards the queer structure.

In shape they resembled inverted cones, each ten feet high and perhaps thirty feet in diameter, and they were constructed of shimmering blue metal. One or two had topped over on their sides owing to the irregular roads to be hampered with the structures in small passages.

"They are not the dwellings of some kind," said Ferozyl quickly.

"Evidently the creatures that use them come from the top. Wonder what sort of being is responsible for these strands of network over there!"

Ranger shook his head as he gazed at dozens of thick, black, gnaty strands which

## Caught in the Webs of the Devil Beasts

stretched over still across the arena, not unlike large spiders' webs.

"Bingo," he muttered. "Have about nothing coming along this place."

Suddenly, rounding a hillside, Ranger plucked suddenly at the spectral's skirts.

"Down, quick!" he hissed.

Both men crouched down in the long black grass. "Something is coming towards us," whispered Ranger. "It's only a few yards away, behind that hillside. Let's hope it doesn't see us—it's not human."

A couple of seconds later a sound like the clanking of armor reached them and then a grotesque thing passed only a few paces away. At sight of it both men immediately stifled their laughing.

It was about four feet high and it resembled nothing so much as a large spider. Its body was divided into two parts, the lower being a soft abdomen and the upper a kind of crusty body from which grew six pairs of legs.

The foremost pair was equipped with cruel-looking claws which it apparently used as hands. The other five pairs it used for locomotion. Surrounding these was a small protuberance covered with hair, in which were not less than seven small eyes. A small central line that of an elephant only much shorter.

The gigantic beast was an olive-green color and, most remarkable of all, wore a covering of the same black, thread-like substance which lay like a pall over the cone buildings. It was evidently of great strength for it seemed to support two small cubes which jumped together as it walked.

A second it passed, as if nothing either then or then. Then unknown pressure, and then moved forward with a lightning, everything movement which suggested a dash towards the page. "My dear! We coming towards us," hissed Ranger. But even as he uttered the words he realized that, like Ranger, he was paralyzed with terror, helpless under the influence of this horrible thing.

Nearer and nearer it came until, a couple of feet away, it stopped, stared at the intruders and then withdrew for a slow, passing it over their bodies.

Ranger shuddered. The fact of that cold, clammy touch galvanized his mind into activity.

"It's no use," he hissed, "we're simply got to move before it is too late. Let's make a dash for it. Ready? Now!"

He sprang up and leapt back from the creature, pulling the spectral along with him.

The insect did not attempt to stop them. Instead, its two claws clutched the tubes at its side and, wriggling down them, it passed them to its head like two telescopes.

"Come on!" yelled Ranger. "The beast will be after us in a second."

They staggered away in head haste, but they had not taken more than half a dozen strides when a searing pain darted through their heads—an agonizing force which seemed to be tearing the very coils of their brains apart.

"By the way, it's these tubes!" hissed Ranger. "Bingo . . . not . . . of . . . spider . . . have . . ."

His voice trailed away as his legs collapsed beneath him. Even he sank to the ground like one in a hypnotic trance.

Ranger staggered frantically to raise his weak power. He was under the influence of thought waves, he realized, which were up

ing his resistance. But that wouldn't get him. He'd lost the devil's thought waves. He'd reaped Ferothy and together they . . .

His mind seemed to snap. He fell to the ground.

### ★ FOOD FOR THE SPIDERS

It seemed only a matter of seconds before Ranger's mind began to function again. In reality it must have been many hours, but in either way only he accepted the change of surrounding which had occurred.

At first he thought he was suspended by ropes a few yards above the main floor of a phosphorescent cavern. His arms were outstretched on either side of him as though he were being crucified.

Yes he felt no discomfort other than extreme cold. The temperature, he estimated, must be well below zero.

He moved his head slightly the better to take stock of his position, and then widened a pair of sidelong glances.

Black strands of some shaggy gummy substance stretched far yards on either side of him, and other strands interlaced with these. It was this mass which was holding him suspended in mid-air.

Then he caught sight of Ferothy suspended in a similar manner on his left.

The two men sat formed the centre of a huge web which had been woven round them!

The strands were as thick as twigs and as strong as wire, their hold as effective as the tendrils of an octopus.

But the two men were not the only occupants of these ghastly structures, stretching away in the distance were other webs, each of which held what had some been a living thing.

They were like heaps of some pale, gummy substance, and one or two still quivered and twitched as if life were not yet extinct. But by the agonizing other which hung above the cavern Ranger judged that the majority had been dead for some time.

"Hello . . . Hello, Ranger!" Ferothy's voice echoed eerily through the web and vapor in the cavern. Hearing that their friend's hand he continued eagerly. "Are you all right?"

"I'm not alone, if that's what you mean," replied Dick grimly. "We seem to be in a devil of a spot. I reckon we'll be lucky if we ever leave this place alive." He tapped feebly at the black strands which bound him.

"Certainly, I'd like to lay my hands on one of those spiders."

"Not so fast," muttered Ferothy. "We've got to think this out slowly. I reckon the spider creature lives as a pair with these lumps of matter around us. This is obviously some sort of cold storage chamber. It looks as though they've placed us in here along with three other things as which they probably live."

"Gosh! Then they intend to eat us?"

"It looks like it," said Ferothy grimly, "unless we can escape. What about your web-knife? Can you reach it? It might cut these strands."

Knowing all his strength, Ranger tried to force his right arm down to his pocket, but it was useless. He could move it only a few inches, and, as was to be expected, his muscles, it flew back into its original position.

"It's no good," he muttered. "The strands are too thick elastic. I'll have a go at chewing it. It'll be rotten, but I might be able to get my arm free that way."

Snapping backwards and forwards, he managed to catch a strand between his strong teeth. Then, for the greater part of an hour, he worked maniacally.

One by one the strands parted before his determined onslaught, and at last he was able to free his right arm and to reach his knife.

Opening it with his teeth, he flashed a triumphant glance across at Ferothy and then began chawing at the strands around him.

(Read on at foot of next page.)



The revolting trunk of the devil beast was reaching out for Ranger as Ferothy brought the metal tube crashing down on its head.

# The BRITAIN of To-Morrow

The Almost-Human Robot: Dyed Aluminium: Wax that won't burn: Cloth made of Glass: Machines to weigh a signature: Indestructible rollers: Amazing inventions that are making a new wonder world.

## Robot Woman Who Sneers!

A WOMAN robot—the nearest approach to a human ever constructed by man—was on show at the White City.

The model, which was perfected by Mr. Courtney Pellack, the sculptor, can smile, talk and weep. And, of course, smoke a cigarette.

Ultra-modern furniture games in fashion, and at the White City many new designs were to be seen.

Labour-saving devices abounded. A metal wardrobe crumpled on a seasonal bed which could also be converted into a food safe! There was a bridge table which could be transformed into a clothes horse.

Among the furniture displayed was the new electric chair—it doesn't crumple or sag—with which are visitors of the future not to smile, and a combined pullover and skirt which can be converted in a moment from one to the other.

## Glass Thread

AT Olympia the Chemical Industry was showing its earnest and brightest ideas.

Dyed aluminium, bright, shining metal of every imaginable colour, was on show. It is dyed by an electrical process, in which the aluminium itself acts as a cathode.

Wax that won't burn was another advance which will be used for covering wires in cables.

Glass fibre—thin threads of glass for look

insulation—proved a big attraction. It is being used for wrapping cables and pipes.

## Freezing by Heating

WERE you to think that coal was useful only to keep the fire going and for making gas to cook the Sunday joint? Don't you believe it!

One exhibit of the South Metropolitan Gas Company showed that there are nearly fifty uses for the by-products of coal. Here are some of them:—

Benzene for petrol engines; heavy oil for Diesel engines; products for dyes, perfumes and explosives; preparations for cryo-drying; resins for, pitch; cresolite; sulphuric acid; ammonia; and hydrochloric acid.

Some of the hundreds of other exhibits that were telling of the future included:—

Ceramics broken for baby carriages.

Pipe materials that defy the toughest blows.

Tenax materials that cannot wear.

A refrigerating machine using heat for freezing purposes.

An automatic dish washer.

A 2,000 h.p. petrol engine.

A weighing machine so delicate it can weigh a signature.

Two thousand ton power presses.

Sheet-rolling gears and rollers that are practically indestructible.

Glass windows that resist violent shocks.

Metal-lined plywood.

Reaching this, they found themselves looking down upon the black regions of the abyss below.

They had emerged from one of the tunnels they had seen in the top of the cone shaped structures of blue metal!

Close by, one of the beams of light roared itself upwards, searching them out by brightness. On either side of them stretched the deserted grass covered plain, dotted here and there with the purple trees. For away could be seen a black spark smouldering on the top of a distant mountain.

"There it is!" cried Ranger excitedly.

"The spark!"

They dropped to the ground and, making the cover of bushes and rocks wherever possible, set on towards it.

But they had hardly covered a hundred yards before a faint glowing sound caused them to halt and look anxiously at one another.

"What's that?" asked Fenchy.

Ranger started his eyes to right and left. "She's heated again." "Goodness knows," he muttered, "I can't see anything."

"I can. Look! Look!" Fenchy pointed ahead.

In the distance, partially obscured by the trees, was half a dozen bottle-shaped structures. They moved at a distance of about twenty feet from the ground.

Gradually one would move close towards a smooth rocky patch of the cone bed and move along it for a few yards, then rise into the vapour again.

"Follow here," Fenchy cried. "Quick! They're looking this way."

He jerked Ranger behind a rock.

The laughing of the monster had ceased into a whispering whisper. They were much nearer now, their outlines clearly defined.



Exhibit for a short time at the White City, showing the new design.

## A 30-Mile Shop Window

GREAT Britain has been showing the world her wares.

In the British Industries Fair, at Olympia, and the White City in London, and at Castle Broomfield in Birmingham, she has been displaying the latest examples of British craftsmanship and design to buyers from all over the world.

Over 2,500 exhibitors had their goods on show at the Fair, and the giant "shop window" was estimated to cover over thirty miles.

Big business was done, and the Fair has proved that Britain is still showing her competitors the way in progress and development. In these miles of shop windows one saw many glimpses of the world of to-morrow.

## THE WORLD OF VAPOUR

(Continued from previous page)

The sharp blade cut through the tough substance slowly but surely, and soon the few threads which still held him were unable to support his weight.

He sank slowly to the ground and, averting the back of his head, he stood with the shiver of bodies with hanging about him.

In spite of the extreme cold he was drenched with sweat, but without delay he attacked the web which held the acrobat.

Several minutes later they were both on the floor of the cave.

And now to find the way out of this dimly lit cavern? muttered Ranger. "There must be an exit somewhere. Let's hope to the left. But," I thought, I felt a shudder coming from that direction."

For some minutes they gazed their way over the rocky floor, peering under dozens of the slender web-structures which draped the roof. None were taken in the centre, so though the victim had been rescued. "Look, Ranger—straight ahead!" breathed Fenchy excitedly. "Some sort of steps."

They pointed on and found themselves before a wall of solid rock. Below was the floor of the cave were some glistening metal steps which led upwards into the darkness.

And then out of that blackness came a small glowing sound! "Listen!" cried Fenchy. "What's that?"

He sang himself first against the wall of the cave, dragging Ranger with him. As they walked, every nerve tense, the glaring round glow loomed until a sinister form loomed into view from out of the darkness above.

It was one of the glistening spiders descended by the metal stairs.

Ranger felt the grip of the scientist's fingers upon his arm. "We've got to kill

that creature, Dick," he heard. "It's our death or his."

Ranger nodded grimly.

The ballroom spider reached the bottom of the stairs and stopped abruptly. A few seconds it remained there, as if sensing the approach of an enemy.

At the same instant Ranger sprang forward, breaching the jack-knife shift. Before the monster could move he brought it down with devastating force upon the small protrusions above the rocky body.

The creature reeled momentarily paralysed and, taking advantage of this, Ranger drove his knife again and again into the soft body.

A groan, that itself could have its wounds. It made a futile effort to clutch Ranger with the freezing claws and then, finding them beneath its body collapsed in a writhing heap upon the ground.

Ranger gazed in horror at his handiwork, and then passed a trembling hand over his forehead. He felt the spasm of his hand on his shoulder. "Good work, Dick," he said quietly.

Without another word they began to mount the steps.

It was a difficult task, for the steps were steep, but it was their only hope of escape, and with the strength born of desperation they struggled upwards.

Some fifty feet above the floor of the cave the steps ceased abruptly at the entrance to a narrow passage which led upwards into the rock.

The tunnel was just sufficiently large to admit their bodies and, wriggling forward on their stomachs, they managed to pass their way along. The steps became steeper as they progressed.

The rock ceased and the passage continued through the earth itself, ascending a bank, they sat on opening only a few feet away which let into the light.

## The Fight for the Vapour Ship

"Why, they're machines!" gasped Ranger.

Fenpath added:

"Yes, flying machines without wings or propellers. They are not driven on the usual multiple driver. Look at the trail of thick red gas they have behind."

It certainly was remarkable. Underneath the broad, torpedo-shaped body of gliding metal, six sets of wheels revolved unceasingly. They were apparently the sole means of supporting the machines both through the vapor and over the ground. When flying, two thin streams of red seemed to form just in front of the wheels as if, like a tank, the machines were laying down their own track before passing over it.

### ★ BATTLE IN THE VAPOUR

There is a chance were not barely fifty yards away, and through the transparent windows on the face of the torpedo body the two companions could see that each was constructed by a slightly different craftsman.

Judging out of from of the machines were three steel tubes about six feet long which looked like guns of some description. Nothing visible issued from these mouths yet they pointed towards the ground, and the craftmen inside continuously changed their direction, much as one would use a torch to locate a missing object.

Then for a fraction of a second one of the tubes was trained upon Ranger. He gasped out in agony and threw his arm about his head in instinctive protection. During that moment he had experienced a searing pain.

The feeling was that some diabolical influence of incense power was streaming through his veins. It was the same feeling he had experienced when they had been captured by the vapor creature.

Fenpath, seeing his enemy, instantly flung out an arm and held him tight against the rock.

"What's the matter?" he breathed.

"Nothing here,"

"Those tubes," gasped Ranger. "They're thought-guns."

"Thought-guns, eh?" muttered the scientist grimly. "The same as those tubes they carry, only more powerful."

The machines darted higher and farther only a few yards away from the rock under which the two men were hidden. But they stopped suddenly, and a few moments later all but one of the machines had passed on, scattering the black vegetation with their thought-guns. The remaining one had alighted only a few yards away.

Not daring to take their eyes off it, Fenpath and Ranger saw a metal hatch open. The spider creature crawled out of the control console, dropped to the ground and began to peer between the wheels. Apparently one was not functioning properly.

Fenpath's eyes lit up excitedly.

"Now's our chance," he breathed. "If we could capture that machine we could use it to regain the sphere. If we move from this spot we're bound to be seen sooner or later. What do you say?"

Ranger looked towards the machine and at the unresponsive creature which had its back turned towards them.

"It's worth trying," he whispered tensely. "Two of us and my knife should be more than a match for the beast."

His fingers leapt to his pocket and he drew out the knife.

They looked behind them through the vapor. The other machines were now far in the distance. With ordinary luck they should be able to capture the wounded machine and escape unseen.

Waiting until the gigantic insect had adjusted the defect—a matter of a minute or so—they left the shelter of the rock and with white faces and nerves tensed to the highest pitch rushed forward over the few yards which separated them from the creature.

Still it seemed unaware of their presence, and Ranger was already poised on his feet ready to spring when Fenpath caught his foot in a crevice in the ground and stumbled forward.

Immediately the creature swung round, took in the situation in a flash, and whipping the metal tubes toward its prey relished this as its food.

But as it did so Ranger sprang, the force of the impact wrenching the tubes from its grasp. It staggered back a few paces, then, steadying itself on its thin legs, darted back into its attack and whirled round so that its steel body, lengthening its arm by its sides.

Ranger was unable to move, the strength of those spider legs was amazing. It hunched and struggled and canted, but it was no use. The creature held him at such a distance that he could not reach his body.

Ranger's eyes opened in terror as he saw the metal truck crawl open for the first time. At the upper end, during while through a slit in its shut armor. That it intended to suck his blood he had not the slightest doubt.

He felt his legs secured in another vice-like grip and then the creature's trunk moved slowly towards his arm. Gritting his teeth he turned his head away.

But that instant his trunk was still more his than his head when a metal tube descended with shattering force upon the insect's head.

Fenpath, realising his companion's danger, had watched up one of the metal thought-guns tubes and, realising it above his head, had a flash, had brought it down upon the machine's armor.

It recoiled, it held momentarily, and crashed back a few paces. He turned in amazement. Fenpath raised his head after him upon its body.

Ranger, meanwhile, advanced hesitantly with his knife and the creature hunched still further away. Then it turned and snuffed away into the shelter of the black vegetation.

"No use following it," gasped Fenpath. "We haven't time. Into the machine. Quick!"

They scrambled through the hatchway into the control room, pulling the hatch behind them. Inside was a number of handles and switches, some evidently for operating the guns, and others for controlling the machine itself.

Ranger sprang to a handle which jatted grotesquely in front of the transparent window, and moved in a fraction of an inch.

There was a jolt, and peering out, he saw that they were moving slowly forward over the ground. Then followed several nerve-racking minutes whilst Ranger experimented with the various controls.

The machine entered slowly, riding in the air, running along the ground, bumping in all directions, whilst the control, appearing to receive his duty yet knowledge the loss of every previous moment, stood anxiously with his face pressed against one of the rear windows. That to yet there was no sign of pursuit.

"O.K.!" yelled Ranger suddenly. "I think I've got the hang of the thing. Here goes!"

He pulled on a lever, and responding nimbly the machine darted steadily into the vapor.

"Bar is the right," yelled Fenpath. "The sphere is about a couple of miles in that direction."

Leaving two trails of crimson vapor behind them they race three hundred feet above the ocean bed, and headed rapidly towards the black spot of the sphere.

They had covered a mile in this way before Fenpath pointed with gasping finger through the rear window. "They're after us!" he cried. "Three of them. That same old man have given the alarm."

Ranger, in face white and drawn, did his best to control his gunners, but he was unaccustomed to handling the vapor machine, and they were steadily outdistanced.

"It's no use," he cried. "We'll never make it."

By now the foremost machine was only a dozen yards behind. "We've got to," gasped Fenpath. "Their guns are powerful. They are pointing directly towards us and we have left nothing. It's obvious the thought waves cannot penetrate the walls of the craft. They'll find it hard to stop us."

They were now only a quarter of a mile away from the mountain. The sphere loomed like a silver sun a thousand feet above.

But the following machines were being driven, with enormous difficulty, said as Ranger tilted the nose of their own sphere so as that they were out off.

Directly above them were the three spider-driven machines.

"Try to force a way through," hissed Fenpath. "It's all we can do. Perhaps they will pass away when they see us heading towards them."

Ranger gripped the controls a little tighter, his chin tilted. As he wrenched a lever the machine increased its upward acceleration. It ducked forward straight towards the other three.

Then—nothing! Contrary to Fenpath's expectations, the three pursuers had not given way and their own machine had crashed into the midst of them. Ranger and Fenpath were thrown heavily in one side by the shock of the first collision. But this was followed almost immediately by another and another. Striking the first machine a glancing blow they and bounced off it and ricocheted on to the next only a few yards away.

Seized but otherwise unhurt, Ranger sprang back to the controls and looked out of the window.

"Six-foot snakes!" he cried delightedly.

"We've broken 'em! We must have crashed into the wheels on the underside of the body. Anyway our's out of control. The other two are jolting madly. Good! They must be damaged too, they're beginning to decelerate."

The loud grating sound of metal meeting rock reached them a moment later. Though they could not see it, both knew that one of the machines had crashed into the rocky slopes at the base of the mountain.

Ranger gripped the controls, and carefully manipulating the controls, managed to bring the machine to a standstill near the sphere. Five minutes later they were safely inside, and the steel door slammed firmly into place.

Both looked a sight of relief.

"Best! It feels like home in here," grinned Fenpath.

"All the same we are not back yet," he puffed Fenpath. "Let's get busy. The moment we leave this ghastly region the better."

Ranger stepped to the compressed air lever and watched it over. The steel shell quivered like a living thing, rocked cautiously for a moment from side to side and then began to ascend ponderously through the black sea, surrounded by a halo of large air bubbles.

Without gyroscope, pressure gauge, or other instruments they had no means of telling whether they ascended vertically upwards or described an oblique course.

But after a journey of two hours the sphere broke water easily two miles from the mountain, which, although giving them no far break had remained in the furthest hope that they might return.

Both were extremely hungry, and over a heavy meal in the captain's cabin Fenpath related their strange adventures.

"I tell you, Captain, out off by three miles at most of side in another civilization," he concluded appreciatively.

"A world of vapor which has probably existed for countless ages, and in which a grotesque insect is supreme. Let us thank God these creatures have not yet discovered a way to break through their watery prison. For what that day dawn there will begin the most terrible battle for supremacy this world has ever known."



## CAUGHT IN THE DEATH RAYS of the Red World, with every breath a leaping flame, every movement a nerve- racking agony

"Restless! He's on fire!" roared Philip.

Then he noticed a strange thing about the flame. Although it burned the flesh emitted like an ordinary flame it seemed to give out a bright heat as well. In fact, it lit up the whole of his face like an electric torch.

"Radiant!" Philip told himself. "A radiant flame!" The mind went back to his school days. Radiant was used as the treatment of cancer—it possessed wonderful curative properties and was a great blessing to medical science.

But it could also tell those who used it. Many doctors, he remembered, had faced a slow, lingering death through extraordinary means to cure people.

Was there in those radiant rays which now flooded the cabin of the *Atomotive* a speeding up of that terrible process? And why had he not been alerted like his companions? Perhaps some people were not so susceptible to radiant as others.

Then, the better again.

Two of the mighty yellow rays which had been sweeping upon their objective rested upon the *Atomotive* again, and the evil effect in the cabin was almost immediate.

Philip had to fight for every breath he took, his breathing became slower and slower, and he struggled to retain consciousness. Death was waiting for all three victims something could be done. But what was there to be done? "Help! Help!" The words were choked in his throat as he felt his face light up.

He clapped his hand to his mouth and felt a dash of pale sweat across his palm. Flames were coming from his own mouth now! Involuntarily he dragged his hand away, and in a dizzy cloud of horror wondered why the flame could burn his hand like that and yet not burn his lips. He did not realize that the flame was actually caused by his own breath leaving his mouth and coming into contact with the yellow ray. But though he was sick and dizzy Philip felt no other effects.

Then an idea came to him! Out out of the path of the rays, escape the deadly incense. . . .

"The rockets!" he yelled, and the flames leapt farther from his mouth. He staggered over to the rocket-firing apparatus and dragged over another of the twenty glowing levers. Once more there was a tremendous roar as the third rocket was fired, again a great blast of flame leapt out. The ship trembled slightly and plunged upwards with double velocity.

"Thank heaven!" muttered Philip.

"Now we'll escape these deadly rays."

He was right, for as the rocket fired its yellow glare washed from the cabin and the flames burning in the mouths of all three went out like smothered candles.

### ★ IN THE GRIP OF THE DEATH RAYS

A SCREAM echoed across the cabin of the great rocket ship, downburst, in a ghastly radiance of sound.

Philip staggered gave vent to his terror as he gazed down at his two companions lying on the floor of the cabin.

The whole plane was filled with a ghastly yellow haze that lit up the faces of all three in a deathly pallor. But that was not the sight that horrified the young space adventurer.

Out of the mouths of his two companions were issuing slow, black flames, and from the flames were rising thin wisps of black smoke.

Unconsciously, Philip's hand went to his own mouth. No, he was all right. . . yet!

But at any moment, he realized, he might also be in the grip of the deadly yellow rays from Mars.

For the *Atomotive* was hurtling towards the red planet, and the inhabitants of that strange world were alive in the fact; were sent now reading at their long houses of yellow death rays to an effect to equal the strange craft they considered an invader.

Not that the three companions were invaders. Anything but that! None of them had come as this nightmare of a voyage from Mars.

Philip Jones and his two friends, Peter Mandley and Victor Standish, had been enjoying a motor-cycling holiday when Victor's old model of a machine had cooked out. In searching round for a garage they had come upon the old shed which housed the dream of Professor Slater—the amazing space ship, *Atomotive*.

Stupidly inquisitive, the three companions had investigated the strange machine, and whilst inside it a strange movement of Philip had released the ascending valves. The *Atomotive* had gone clanking out of the shed and hurtling up into space at a thousand miles an hour.

Poor Professor Slater had arrived just in time to see his dream-ship, the child of a life's ambition, disappearing before his eyes.

The three horrified and unwilling passengers had been unable to stop the progress of the great ship, and after a series of health-seeking adventures in space had found themselves soaring the planet Mars.

## By Professor A. M. LOW, D.Sc.

A space radio machine in the *Atomotive*, which translated any language into English, had picked up a message from the Red World, and it had told the three adventurers that their approach had been seen and a deadly reception prepared for them.

Now as they had received the image of the Red World in a giant Teletwin machine, yellow beams of light had come searching up into space for them.

Peter and Victor had immediately been struck down, but Philip seemed to have escaped the full force of the deadly rays. The flare of his submachine, however, horrified him.

"Peter! Peter, old boy!" he roared, and shook the unconscious figure searching those ghastly blue flames. But there was no response.

In a moment of panic, Philip rolled his handkerchief into a ball and pressed it against Peter's lips in an effort to extinguish the flame.

The only effect was to burn a hole clean through the handkerchief.



## Destroying the Death Rays



Philip looked out into the wilderness of space and an amazing sight met his gaze. The fierce yellow death rays were ending in clouds of white mist, and all about the ship was a strange vapour.

Flinging the other tools back into his pocket, he got the screw-driver under the lid of the box.

He worked feverishly, levering and forcing, and then suddenly the lid flew open.

Another yellow ray had now found its target, and was playing on the cabin. Two more found the rings a second later, and even while Philip was fumbling in the box, which was really nothing more than a highly complicated switchboard, several more of the deadly yellow beams passed through the cabin window.

Philip picked up the book again and read the instructions aloud.

"Turn the first four switches over, allowing three amperes between each."

Determinedly he did this, though by the time he had reached the third the effect of the freshly concentrated rays was beginning to tell upon him. His head shook and his hand was growing dizzy.

After peering twice into, Philip jumped over cables and wires and, then waited for whatever might happen.

"All the rays are on the target," howled the Martian commander. "Keep them there and annihilate the Earth ship. Ray number seven . . . yes, no off the target . . . switch over five hundred amperes to the right."

Not only did Philip hear this vivid phrase in the dreadful context with the Martians; he also saw the evidence of its effect, for immediately a large and particularly powerful yellow ray came into being, and now the whole cabin was again under the blindest fire of all the rays.

Then, just as suddenly, the yellow glare in the cabin disappeared.

Philip breathed again.

"It's worked!" he yelled, "it's worked!"

He went across to the cabin window and looked out.

What he saw amazed him more than anything he had yet seen on this strange amazing journey.

The outline of the great yellow beam still still he saw, but instead of there being a fierce yellow as they had been before, they appeared to have turned into a white vapour which grew in density.

Great clouds of white poured up into space and swirled lazily with tinges of yellow at the sides or edges of the beams.

In this great wilderness of space there seemed to be nothing but enormous piles of white vapour which forced itself slowly into fantastic shapes and then, as it grew in density, vanished away into nothingness.

Philip gasped to wonder at the black box—a magic box indeed—and as he peered into it he was attracted by the sound of movement from one of his companions.

He turned to find that Peter was stirring again, and now Victor was showing signs of recovered vitality.

Philip went over to Peter first, and shook him by the shoulder again.

"Peter!" exclaimed Philip. "It's all right again. The old boy's back did the trick. The rays are finished."

Peter got up on his feet again.

"I say, Philip," he said, "I need have been dreaming. I've had a terrible nightmare."

Philip laughed. "You bet you have!" he said.

Peter looked around him in a slightly dazed fashion and then his eyes fell upon Victor.

"Victor's all right then," he breathed, "how did you do it?"

Victor yawned and stretched his arms. Then he looked about him, gazed as he saw the brown features of his friends—bored by the power of the radiant rays.

"Why?" he said, "I must have been sleeping."

"You certainly have," grinned Philip, and he then related the whole of the story to his astonished friends.

He was just concluding when another startling interruption came.

It was the Martian voice again.

"The Earth ship has changed our death rays," it shouted. "Did we will get them. Our secrets must never be revealed to the Earth people. We must keep them away at any cost. They bring only evil and disaster."

There was a pause, and all three listened eagerly.

The voice continued.

"All things were destined will turn on to our beautiful planet, which is the evil meter against which no living creature can survive. Every power station will cease motion . . . to transmit the death force through the ether."

What new horrors await the space adventurers? What monstrousness have the strange people of the Red World in store for them? More thrilling adventures. In next week's installment of Professor Lee's great story.

It went by Road, Under and Over the Water, and Flew in the Air

# Submarine Road-plane No. 1

Out of a job, down to his last bean, John Hall learns that his Uncle has died and left him everything . . . everything!

## ★ AN OLD CROCK GOES FLYING

JOHN HALL, who has been closely as he studied the "Strippers' News" columns. He had been out of work for some time and was thoroughly up against it.

"Not a job I could apply for," he muttered.

John had been a workman in a garage six months before, but had passed the great army of unemployed when the firm went crash.

He turned to the "Penny" column of the newspaper. Sometimes there was a job advertised there. Dependably enough he missed it.

Suddenly he started and blurted. He had read his own name!

Thrilling with excitement, he read the notice.

Well John Hall, last heard of in New York, nephew of the late Septimus Hall, please communicate with the undersigned solicitor.

John read the notice twice. Only then was he convinced.

"Good lord, it must mean me!" he exclaimed aloud. "I'd forgotten all about Uncle Septimus. He was so kind to be well off. Good, I've got to see that solicitor as soon as I possibly can."

His face felt when he read the solicitor's address. It was in a town right up in the north of Yorkshire. The fare from London would be quite thirty shillings, enough.

John hardly pulled his money out.

"Just under two pounds," he muttered. "And that's every penny I can raise up. I expect it'll be enough."

He decided to risk it, and within an hour he was seated in a north-bound express.

It was twilight when he arrived at Yewsbury, the town where his uncle had lived.

The solicitor's office was, of course, closed, so John spent the rest of his money on lodgings for the night.

At six o'clock next morning he was waiting outside the solicitor's office.

An office-boy received him.

"Mr. Crowfield won't be here until ten o'clock, sir," he told him.

It seemed to John that the time would never pass. But at last ten o'clock struck and soon afterwards Mr. Crowfield arrived.

He seemed a little surprised to find somebody waiting to consult him at this early hour.

"I'm John Hall," said John eagerly. "I'm the nephew of Mr. Septimus Hall, and I only saw your advertisement yesterday."

The solicitor blinked. His eyes seemed to be fixed on John.

"Yes, yes," he said kindly enough. "Come into my room."

John obeyed and waited anxiously.

"I'm afraid I'm rather a disappointment for you," began Mr. Crowfield slowly. "Have you come for me?"

"From London, and now, feeling a sudden reaction of fear. The solicitor didn't appear surprised to see him.

Mr. Crowfield led him in.

"A pity," he said, shaking his head. "A great pity. It would have been much better if you had written to me first."

John explained that he was hard up and wanted to claim his legacy left to him.

"There isn't anything to claim," said the solicitor coldly.

"The money your uncle left was barely sufficient to pay for the funeral and to clear up outstanding debts. The reason we wanted that advertisement was to give you this."

He held up a key. John looked at it.

"That is the key of your uncle's work shop," explained the solicitor. "What there is in the workshop no one knows. Your uncle spent most of his time in there during the last few years. He directed that no one should enter except his lawful heir. That is yourself, of course."

Consistent of a dreadful shaking feeling, John took the key. Instead of money he had been left a workshop.

"Maybe it contains something of value," said Mr. Crowfield. "For your own sake I hope so. Perhaps you will call back and tell me what the shed contains."

John promised, and it seemed that the business was over.

A tramp of five miles brought him to his uncle's house, but John scarcely gave the place a glance. In the far corner of the garden he saw a well-kept stable.

He inserted his key and opened the door. Once again his pulses were thumping.

What would he find inside?

He hesitated for two minutes he knew the worst. The shed contained nothing except a rather ancient motor-car.

John's expert eye soon gauged its value. It was not worth more. It was of an old-fashioned type, quite strong, but rather hot.

There were a number of strange instruments on the dashboard, but John thought they were relics of early motoring days. He noticed them but could make nothing of them.

He smiled himself on the roof-board. On his uncle's legacy! He had come all the way from London to find nothing but an old crock. Probably he wouldn't get five pounds for it.

"I saw a garage outside Trevelyan," he thought. "I'll use it down there and see if I can sell it. I ought to get enough to pay my fare back to London."

He discovered that the petrol and oil tanks were well stocked and that the old car was licensed. He hopped into the driving seat and tried his engine. It ticked over nicely.

John put the car out. He moved quickly in first gear down the little drive into the road.

Now John went into town. She behaved nicely. The road was wider now so he slipped into top—

He gasped.

For something amazing had happened. The car leapt forward like a wild thing. In a moment or two she was travelling at well over thirty miles an hour.

John took his foot off the accelerator pedal as though it was red hot.

He soon widened as he went. The speed of the car had actually increased!

Discreetly he tried to put his clutch down, but it wouldn't work. He put all his weight on the foot-brake. It refused to budge. He tried the hand-brake but it only moved hardly at its socket.

The car dashed forward on its own. He had to grip the wheel firmly to prevent the roaring vehicle from crashing into the hedge. He thanked his stars he was an experienced driver.

But what could he do now?

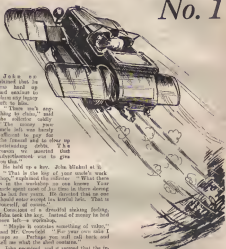
He had tried everything he knew to stop the car, but nothing it seemed that the controls had of power. There would be a terrible crash when he met the first vehicle approaching along the narrow lane.

As the very moment came the sound of an electric horn.

A car was coming round a bend not far away. Gaily by very careful driving could the two cars pass in the narrow lane!

John's mind ran wild. And to make matters worse he saw that the other was a police car. His co-passenger had already seen him, for a plumed constable appeared behind the wind-screen.

"STOP—POLICE!" John's brain cried. What on earth could he do?





## Wonder Car Takes the High Dive!

It was then that he noticed the lever between the two front seats. Perhaps this was the hand-brake.

He pulled it hard over.

The effect was a heaviest thump, rattling, rattling, rattling he had yet experienced. Two flashes of flame burst from cylindrical-shaped nozzles at the back of the car.

And with these reports—the car rose into the air!

Like a rocket it went up, to meet the front of the police car by a matter of inches.

The police car swerved dangerously and came to a stop with its breast in the hedge.

And John—

He sat behind the steering-wheel like a man in a dream. The car was actually flying.

He saw that noxious above the hedge and had not yet to form solid planes.

The noise had been witnessed by one man—a tramp.

The roar of John's engine had awakened him from his sleep behind the hedge. He took one look—saw the old crack leap over the police car into the air—and covered his face with his hands.

Then, jumping in his bed, he rushed away across the field.

"I'll never touch another drop!" he yelled. "When I see water—come about to fly I would I've got 'em bad! I'll never touch another drop!"

The wings shut upon and once again two mighty reports came from the rear of the car. It hurtled onwards.

John breathed again.

"I wish I could rear it," he muttered. He had found that turning the steering wheel was useless. He just sat there, waiting.

His only hope was that he would come to a flat stretch of country where he could slow the car to a crawl. He would have to risk the crash.

Then he saw a glimmering expanse right ahead.

"Heaven!" he muttered. "That's the sea."

He waited anxiously. There was nothing he could do.

Once again his speed slackened and the car commenced to fall. Quickly he pushed the lever forward and then dragged it back.

Two more reports came from the running-boards. The cylinders were probably exhausted. He was for it now—he'd probably crash before he reached the sea.

Suddenly the speed of his descent slackened. A low humming noise had started up underneath the car. It seemed to John like some sort of helicopter; doubtless this was a safety device which operated automatically when the car's altitude dropped too low.

John sat still, wide-eyed. There was nothing he could do but wait. Nearer and

He gripped his steering-wheel grimly. Racing along the road he swung round a bend.

That he passed.

Right ahead a large cut was driven up across the road. Suddenly an accident had happened. A man lay stretched out in the roadway. There was nobody in or near the car so far as he could see.

John saw that there was a lone chance of avoiding a crash. Between the potholes and the cliff ridges there was a narrow gap. He started to risk it. It was impossible to take the car about a second time.

Wrenching the wheel round he braked for the gap. Straight through it he moved and there—the car was out of control.

John had one glimpse of a stretch of grass to the left and then—the sea far below. He could do nothing but cling to the wheel. Already the car began to spin. Came the sickening sensation of falling.

That a terrific splash!

There was under. John clambered on to his feet, but he had against something. In some amazing fashion a head had closed over the top of the car.

He strove to get it.

Useless. The shield would not budge.

John stared round him—he had just realized that the shield was made of glass. He could see the green beyond, not a drop of water was entering the car.

The car was now completely water tight.

John's head rolled. Would the wonders of this car never cease? He had not hit the bottom. Surely he realized that another thrashing round had started up. It seemed that a propeller was working underneath the car and was pushing it through the water like a submarine.

John wiped the perspiration from his brow.

## ★ SUBMARINE ROAD-PLANE MAKES A CAPTURE

"I never let get out of the alive," John told himself. "I—let's turn the rudder car. Way on north didn't the old boy have a nose explaining what sort of a break he's in?"

Leaving forward, he began to examine the state of instruments on the dashboard. One of them was killed—Amrod.

His fingers closed over it. Dare he push it? He must do something, for already the air in the car was becoming heavy. He would be suffocated unless he could get back to the surface.

He pushed the knob.

It seemed to him that the car tilted a little but he couldn't be sure. Then he noticed that the water in front of the windshield was becoming a lighter green.

He was moving back to the surface.

A few moments later and the car was actually riding on the sea. However, once the house had emerged, she headed forward and went scudding along at a speed of something like thirty or forty miles an hour. The hood raised back.

John pulled at his steering-wheel, but it made no impression on the car's direction. It was hurtling straight forward, absolutely out of his control.

The reason John pulled so hard at the steering-wheel was because ahead of him was a small boat. The man in it was pulling towards a small trawling steamer.

Suddenly a cry went up from the boat. It seemed that the man had spotted the car.

It must have appeared to them to be some queer apparition. A minute before, the whole space of sea had been deserted. But now, here was a strange-looking craft—a craft that appeared to be a motor-car—hurtling towards them at the speed of a fast motor-boat.

They realized that the car was heading straight in their direction—and that it was straight on top of them.

They jumped to their feet and waved frantically.



Missing the police car by inches, the strange machine rose into the air. The policemen gaped; the tramp gave one look—and went tearing away.

And, up above, the strange car was rapidly speeding away—becoming smaller and smaller until it disappeared in the distance.

## ★ WONDER CAR TAKES TO THE SEA

JOHN was in a state of panic.

He realized that the car was rapidly losing altitude, and it appeared to be losing speed, too. Unless he did something he would crash to earth. But what could he do?

John looked wildly round.

"I'd better try that lever again," he decided hopefully.

Gingerly he acted it forward.

The wings slid back. Instantly the car started to drop like a stone.

John pulled the lever back desperately.

never in the ground. Then, most amazing fact of all, the car came down quite smoothly. Luck was with John—he came down on a road. And then—

Whooosh!

Came a terrific shock from the tyres. They skidded for a second on the road surface, and then they had gripped.

John realized that the car was still in top gear and that all the time the rear wheels must have been turning at speed.

## Road-'Plane Takes a Passenger

What it was too late they tried to pull the beam out of the path of the car.

John closed his eyes.

The car lurched and he was nearly flung from his seat.

Opening his eyes again he saw that the car had driven right into the boat. He caught a vision of half a dozen men diving into the sea. Then the boat had gone.

It seemed that one of the men had been too late in diving overboard. In some vague fashion the bottom of the car had pushed him up so that he was sprawling across it. He appeared to be unconscious.

Once again John wiped the perspiration away from his brow.

He was heading right out to sea. Culpas he did something that he would go hunting for still the police can not. He would think he at the mercy of the waves.

Suddenly he gasped. What a fool he'd been! Of course! There was one certain way of stopping the car.

Heading forward he gripped the ignition bar and switched the engine off. At once the car began to slow down.

The man in the boat was stirring now—he was evidently recovering consciousness. John wondered if he was badly hurt. He went back out.

Turning round, he saw that a large motor-launch had got off from the group. It was engaged in picking up the men from the nearest boat.

Then the man lying across the launch began to get to his feet, and John saw that the motor-launch was heading towards him. Standing in the bows was a man, and something glared at his hand. With a feeling of apprehension John realized it was a revolver.

For a moment he knew a sudden, terrifying terror. Suppose some of the crew of the boat had been drowned! In that case he was a murderer.

Ahead, without thinking he leaned forward and turned the ignition switch.

Came two terrible black dots. Then the car was in motion. It gathered speed with amazing rapidity.

Nothing had happened. While the car had been stationary the motion of the water had swung her right round. As she started forward John realized he was heading back for the boat.

The motor-launch swung round in an attempt to head John off.

"If I can get her ashore," thought the murderer, "I'll be able to make a dash for it. The sooner I'm out of this sea and away, the better."

Crank!

The man in the bows of the launch had fired, and the bullet smashed against John's waistcoat. The outside of the glass splintered a little, but that was all.

John flinched.

Probably the windows of this surprising car were bullet-proof.

Once again the man in the launch fired. He didn't feel anticipated that the gun would bring John to his knees and cross his legs.

Then the man with the gun turned and shouted something. He had evidently thought that John intended to run then down.

At the last moment the launch tried to reverse away. So quick was the movement that two gallons dripped under water. The water was in a heap and several of them were jerked overboard.

The car joined the launch by a long foot. She rolled slowly in the swell created by the launch, but it made little or no impression upon her mood.

Looking back John saw that the launch was stopping to pick up the men in the water.

John looked ahead again. He was still

carrying his sound-sleeping passenger on the launch.

Right ahead of him was a small boy. He caught the glimpse of head. The car was heading straight for it.

"Damn! I'll make my getaway now," screamed John.

From the launch he switched off the engine. The car was carried forward by her own momentum. Then—she had hit the beach.

That!

She jerked to a standstill some ten yards or so beyond the water's edge.

John tapped at the door, and jumped out. A crash hit on his shoulder.

"Young man! Keep a voice, I—"

John realized he was on the grass of the sea. He had landed on the car launch.

He whirled furiously. On the beach stood, however, he lost his balance and went down, carrying the other with him. John was awake enough to fall unconscious.

What a mess! "I guess his passenger," "I don't intend you any harm. I'm not one of those going—I want to thank you."

"Thank you!" he gasped. "What—what for?"

The other got to his feet.

John saw he was an elderly, white-haired man.

"Don't you realize what was happening," he gasped. "Those men had kidnapped me. They were carrying me off to that French steamer. But for your appearance as the spot I should be on my way to America now. When you lost your boat I deliberately sang myself across your launch. I'll never be able to thank you enough."

John was still looking steadily at the other when there came a shout from the direction of the sea.

Both men swung round.

At top speed the launch was heading for the small bay.

"We must get away," gasped the man John had rescued. "They're desperate men and they'll kill us both."

John gasped round him.

The car was beamed in by tall cliffs. There was an sign of a path which led upwards. They had no time to search for any other. The launch would run aground within a few minutes and it carried one who was armed. John looked at the launch.

"There's only one thing to do," he gasped.

"We must take to the sea again. I think I know enough about her to handle her safely now. Come on."

Into the car they climbed. John turned the ignition key at once. The car jerked and the engine immediately stopped. Of course! He had left the gear lever in top.

Reaching forward he tapped at it. Strangely enough it came out easily now. Probably this was because the engine was not running.

Once again twisting on the engine, John jerked the lever into reverse. Immediately the car moved backwards. Quickly John remembered her well she was facing towards the sea. As she ran forward into the water so did the launch run ashore.

"New for it," gasped John.

He rang the changes in the accelerator.

Crash!

Once again the strange car had become a veritable speedboat.

Behind blew came the crash of revolvers.

John's passenger dashed.

"It's all right," said John. "They can't harm us now. The plan is bullet-proof."

His passenger was staring at the controls with gaping eyes.

"What kind of a looker is this?" he demanded. "Is it a new invention or something?" And when he said it?

"It's mine," said John. "I don't know that I'm particularly enthusiastic about it though. I only took charge of her this morning and you'll never believe the things that have happened to me since. I set out

to take her down to the garage in order to sell her, and before I knew where I was I was up in the air. This isn't a car at all—it's a thing between an airplane, a submarine and a speedboat."

He frowned.

"But we've got out of the wood yet," he said. "We've not seen the rotten thing."

His passenger pleaded.

"Why not?" he demanded.

John wagged the steering-wheel and demonstrated that it had no effect upon their course.

"We'll get out of sight of the launch," he said, "and as soon as that happens I'll switch off the engine. Maybe the waves will bring her round so that she heads towards the launch again. When that happens we'll try to make another landing. I'm hoping to goodness our petrol supply will last out."

Suddenly the car ran into a rougher stretch of water. It dipped deeply over a wave. As it did so John lurched and tried to steady himself by grabbing at the steering-wheel.

To his surprise that rough patch of the wheel partly got of his socket. It was now clear that the water was higher than it was before. He realized, too, that the bottom of the car was veering round.

"Havoc!" he ejaculated. "I can steer her now. Something's happened to the wheel. Look!"

He brought the car round in a wide circle. Half an hour later John had run the car on to another stretch of deserted beach.

Twisting and John went straight in the locker on the running beach. Opening it he took out a hammer.

"What are you going to do?" demanded his companion.

John gave the hammer a preliminary swing.

"I'm going to break the engine," he announced. "I guess I'm the luckiest chap in Great Britain at the moment. According to all the rules I shouldn't have been dead long ago. I don't leave this car here. Somebody might come along and start her up. If that happens I'll probably have their death on my hands. I'm making sure that the driver's got a chance to see my father decent."

The other caught his arm.

"Don't be so stupid," he gasped. "Don't you realize that in that car you've got one of the wonders of the age? I tell you I know what I'm talking about. My men to the Herbert Reynolds. I'm a motor car manufacturer, and I must have that car taken in my words so that I can have it thoroughly examined."

Suddenly John bent down.

Lying in the back-seat was a large envelope. He saw that it was addressed to him. Picking it up he held it open. Inside was a small book labelled—"Instructions for the Operation of My New Wonder Car."

John turned the pages.

"Good heavens!" he ejaculated. "If only I'd read those instructions before I started. The operation of this car is as simple as can be. It really is a vehicle that can be used either as an ordinary car, as an airplane, a submarine or a speedboat."

The Herbert Reynolds was gawping with confusion.

"You must see the sole rights of producing this car," he said. "It appears that that attempt to kidnap me was one of the luckiest things that ever happened. It brought me in touch with you."

His face suddenly cleared.

"That reminds me," he went on. "The man who kidnapped me left my chauffeur lying senseless in the road outside Long Beach, so must find out what's happened to him."

John flinched.

"But kidnapping in England is rather serious," said John. "It's not."

The Herbert Reynolds said.

"As a matter of fact," he said. "This particular gang are based in England."

[Read on at top of column next of next page]







He'd never realized that his arrival in England would cause such commotion. He could seize his first opportunity of making everybody understand he posed no harm.

His passed the lorry to find him self faced by a steep hill.

Now on the other side of the hill a boy was slowly cycling, forcing the path round in a desperate attempt to avoid the top without having to get off and walk. One suspect his land was bent low over the handlebars.

Suddenly he looked up to discover how much further he had to go. The expression that came into his face baffled description.

One moment it was a look of trepidation, almost unbearable in pain—the next it was a look of sheer, unadulterated terror.

For something was rising above the crest of the hill—a enormous bird.

Then three came into sight a pair of great shoulders.

The cyclist jerked to a standstill and the newspapers fell from his bag to the road. But the boy had to thought for his papers.

"The Striding Terror!" The Striding

terror he ducking with the reports of his capture from the press.

Shooting, he managed to pick up one of the papers. His large fingers fumbled daintily in opening the thin paper.

To the Terror, of course, the words were occasionally small, and he had to peer closely at the print in order to decipher it.

But the glaring headlines were easy enough to read:

# "THE STRIDING TERROR ESCAPES FROM CINCINNATI. GIANT MAN LOOSE AGAIN."

Slowly he read a very highly colored account of the way he had hit the clock. Finally, he came across a couple of paragraphs printed in bold type.

When last seen the Striding Terror was heading north. Any person sighting him should endeavor to keep out of his way and to communicate the news of his appearance to their local police station immediately.

Questions are to be asked in Parliament about the Giant. Public safety demands that such a phenomenon as the Striding Terror should not be allowed to roam the country at will. Measures to safeguard the public are being drafted immediately.

At ten o'clock this morning the B.B.C. will broadcast a message from 12 stations giving the latest news of the Terror. It is possible that the B.B.C. will also be able to broadcast the Government's decision with regard to the Terror.

The Striding Terror looked up at the news. He had slept late that morning. From the sun's position it must be nearly ten o'clock.

One thing was essential. He must try to locate at ten o'clock—he must find out what the Government intended to do about him.

But how could he locate it? He looked down at the episode and the newspapers at his feet. The newspaper boy must have come from a small town or village. Even in a small village there were bound to be wireless sets.

The Terror went forward with great strides now, so that the clock that held the boy was always lost.

Presently, he stood at last, he saw this knee of smoke. He was coming to a village.

Two minutes later he was standing in the village street. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere, but looking over the tops of the small cottages the Terror could see small dots marking across the fields. The cottages must have sighted him and cleared out of the village as soon as the alarm was raised.

In the centre of the village was a building larger than the rest. It was the village inn. The Terror realized that the village inn was almost bound to possess a radio set. Would it be possible for him to get at it?

He flung himself on the ground and peered through a bay window. He found himself looking into the bar parlour.

And there, facing him on the counter, was a wireless set. On a shelf at the back of the counter stood a clock. The Terror realized it only needed a minute or two to get it. He had no time to waste.

With his finger he deliberately tapped out the glass, and then badly pulled the frame out. There was plenty of room for him to vault his arm over, and he did so.

Suddenly the Striding Terror knew exactly where he was. He had found about midnight a John Decker had not been one of the world's most famous scientists for nothing.

It was only with the greatest of difficulty, however, that the Terror succeeded in turning it. He finger appeared to be immediately clumsy as they tried to operate the small knobs. But suddenly the set spoke to him.

He gave the wireless set another slight turn and the speaker came through clear.

As promised in the morning's paper, he waited to give the nation the latest news regarding the Striding Terror. Information

Terror!"

His lips formed the words, but no sound came from them.

Then he had gone racing across the road-way to drop them, except the terror on the other side. That crashed boy sat as he had never run before.

The Terror stooped down the hill, and nearly trod upon the fallen boy. But in the nick of time he saw it, and then he noticed the scattered newspapers alongside.

A look of delight came into his eyes. Newspapers meant news. The whole of England

## The Terror Fires a Village

any more through that he was near early this morning into the village of Blandings in the Northshire. He had spent the night in a field adjoining a farmhouse. He cautiously looked at the farm, far from the farm staff returned they found that all their food stuff was missing.

Despite himself the Terror smiled.

The day was overcast.

A special meeting of the Government is now taking place and the matter of the Striding Terror is under discussion. So far the Government's decision has not been made known. We understand, however, that there is much likelihood as to what it is to be done about the giant. He appears to be an ordinary British subject, and as such is entitled to the full consideration of the law. He has not done anything criminal, and, as a matter of fact, has already performed several noble worthy actions in public welfare cases arising in England.

For the moment, therefore, we can only advise our listeners in the Northshire to keep on the look-out for any sign of the Terror. We suggest that they endeavor to keep out of his way. We shall broadcast an extract of a quarter of an hour with us know the Government's decision.

The Terror frowned.

Should he continue to interfere? It might be an hour or so before any further news came through.

"They'll probably make an attempt to round me up," he thought. "They'll probably try to have me confined somewhere. Well, if they come to seek me, I shall be only too ready to meet and talk to them. I can soon convince them that I am completely sane. For the moment I don't think I need worry."

He withdrew his arm.

As he did so there came a crash from inside the bar parlor. To the Terror, of course, it was only the faintest of sounds and it failed to penetrate his consciousness.

Having to his full height, he pushed the bar's door and continued onwards.

But that crash in the bar parlor of the inn had been caused by the falling of an oil lamp which had stood alongside the counter. It swayed on to the floor and a stream of oil poured in the direction of the fireplace, where a bright fire was burning.

Even as the Terror left the village so did the oil catch fire, and soon the bar parlor was a blazing inferno. There was nobody in the village to raise the alarm. The inn was an old building and its ancient house burned freely.

When he was some ten miles away the Terror turned his head and looked back. In the distance he saw a dense pall of smoke. He frowned. Somewhere behind him was a tremendous fire. He shook his head. Whatever it was, it had nothing to do with him.

He continued onwards.

The sight of the fire brought the villagers scrambling back from their hiding places. They gazed at the scene in stupefaction. One half of the village was in flames, and there was no chance of saving it.

"The work of the Striding Terror," they guessed. "The monster has destroyed the village. Don't then anybody's life or property will be safe."

We shall all be able to restore the good. We've got to follow him up—we've got to get our hands on him again."

So the crowd had made preparations. A flock of birds was marshaled and a number of large bonfires, and on the large were loaded about ropes, huge nets, and several steel ladders.

Sam Blunt had been waiting at the railway station in order to get the first issue of the London newspapers.

They're broadcasting a message at ten o'clock, he exclaimed. That will tell us where the Terror is."

No wonder did Sam Blunt learn that the Terror had been seen near Blandings than he heard for the last of motor-cars. He jumped into the nearest one.

"He's been seen at Blandings," he cried, and as he spoke he rattled his chains loudly. "We'll pick up news concerning him there."

The car disappeared in a cloud of dust, and the heavy ladders crumbled after them.

Seeing Blandings Sam Blunt became conscious of a pall of smoke ahead.

"Looks like trouble," he ejaculated. "Let's hope the Terror hasn't done any damage. It'll be the biggest calamity in the world if the Government decides to have him destroyed."

A mile from Blandings the crowd was now stopped by a policeman. Sam Blunt passed on his ladders and moved.

"Say," he demanded. "What's the idea? We're from Bury's Circus, and we're after the Striding Terror. It's our job to take him back to the circus. My name's Blunt—Sam Blunt—and I'm the man who's been given charge of the Terror and—"

"Go and the circus for you," the policeman roared. "The Striding Terror's done for himself this time. He was here nearly more than an hour ago and this is what he's done. He's set fire to every house in the village."

Sam shook his head.

"It isn't our job," he said. "Who, on earth should the Terror be the village?"

The policeman shrugged his shoulders. "I'm too good at answering puzzles," he snarled. "The last reason he did not let it be him."

Sam Blunt still shook his head. He had had news to do with the Striding Terror that nobody else in England, and had long ago given up, apart from his huge son, the Terror was suddenly vanished. He had been nothing worse than a white whale.

"Where's the Terror now?" he demanded.

"The last we saw of him he was heading North," answered the policeman.

Sam Blunt dropped back into his seat.

"Well," he muttered, "we're going after him. If we can't get through the village we shall have to make a detour."

Even as he spoke he was looking at his watch. Suddenly he ran it halfway up the high embankment, swung his wheel violently round so the vehicle slipped back to the roadway, and then with a flash of fire from his exhaust he was away.

There was a faint glow above Sam Blunt's peak in his determination.

They needed the burning village to find themselves on a second-day road.

"We'll stick to fire," roared Sam Blunt. "We can go round in a kind of oval circle. If the Terror strikes the main road maybe we'll be able to get ahead of him. If we can only do that I'll save me can sit him as soon as he comes near enough."

His manner became a hard straight line. "If we do catch him," he stopped, "we'll make no mistake about getting him. Once we've got him we'll never give him a chance to escape us again."

At a village fifteen miles further on they heard that their quarry had been seen walking some five miles to the left.

Sam Blunt was looking pleased with the course of events. The giant was still keeping to the main road.

A further twenty miles brought them to

the next small town, and supplies in this direction about the fact that no sign had been seen of the Terror.

"He hasn't got as far as this, then," muttered Sam Blunt with satisfaction. "Probably he's proceeding along one of the hundred stretches of road in the country. I don't think there's a single house on it. Had there been a town anything might have happened. The chances are he's still on the road and coming towards us."

Traveling some distance along the road Sam pulled up at the side of a small hill in front of which the road dipped down into a valley. Parking up a strong pair of field-pieces, Sam climbed the hill, and began to sweep the country in the direction from which he expected the Terror to appear.

Suddenly, far below him, he saw something moving amongst the trees. It was the Terror.

"Good!" cried Sam. "It's the only spot visible here at this time. He's not far off the main road and he's following that old Roman track. Thank goodness I know this district well."

As a matter of fact, Bury's Circus had only recently turned this particular district. At top speed Sam went back to his car, and he was with delight that the huge circus tent was coming down the road.

"I've waited long," he exclaimed. "It's turned on to the old Roman road. If we can get ahead of him now he's passed right into our hands. Come on."

Once again the cars took part in a road chase, driving recklessly through narrow lanes until finally they came out to a clearing which was crossed by a dusty, abandoned cart-track road. This was the old Roman road.

"Park the cars under the trees," Sam shouted. "This is where we get him."

The circus cars had been ordered to work quietly. No sooner did the horses arrive than they were immediately unloaded. The huge ladders were dragged to the side of the old Roman road and hidden amongst the undergrowth.

At the edge of the clearing where it was crossed by the road a number of men swarmed up the trees carrying a tremendous net with them. Several others frantically scoured about to the bases of various tree trunks.

Sam Blunt was busy too. With two men helping him, he was hurrying a score of stout rope to the roadway. A shackle depended was dug for it, the rope was fixed inside, and then fast was made tight over it.

Hidden in the bushes, a number of men hung on to the other end of the rope.

Suddenly there came a cry of warning from one of the tallest trees.

"He's coming straight towards us," it said.

The members of any danger in front of him the Striding Terror came. He had looked to the old Roman road because he'd become weary of the seemingly endless march. It suddenly occurred to him that the area used was eventually had to come here too.

At the moment the Terror was rather scared of large towns. There was no knowing what sort of reception he would receive. He was looking at the surrounding places where he would have plenty of scope to move. This was necessary until he knew what decision the nation had come to concerning him.

With bated breath Sam Blunt watched his approach.

Would the giant set his feet down in the center of the narrow road by the rope? If he suddenly took the rope then the whole plan for capturing him might come to naught.

A pall of triumph almost smothered him. For the Terror's feet had come right down in the very center of the hidden road.

Even before the Terror had placed all his weight upon that leg the men holding the other end of the stout rope heaved with all their might. The rope did not snap and the Terror's feet in fact were held while he was conscious of a terrible jerk. Then completely off his balance, he pitched forward

## ★ MAN-MOUNTAIN'S VENGEANCE

THE Striding Terror had not been the only person with a personal interest in the action unaccompanied that morning.

At Bury's Circus very few men had gone to sleep after the Terror's departure.

Sam Blunt, the publicity man, had carried an idea in his mind.

"We can't let him go," he roared. "It's the biggest thing that ever happened to us. We've already made a small fortune out of him. If we let him go he'll come back on his own and keep him here for several months





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